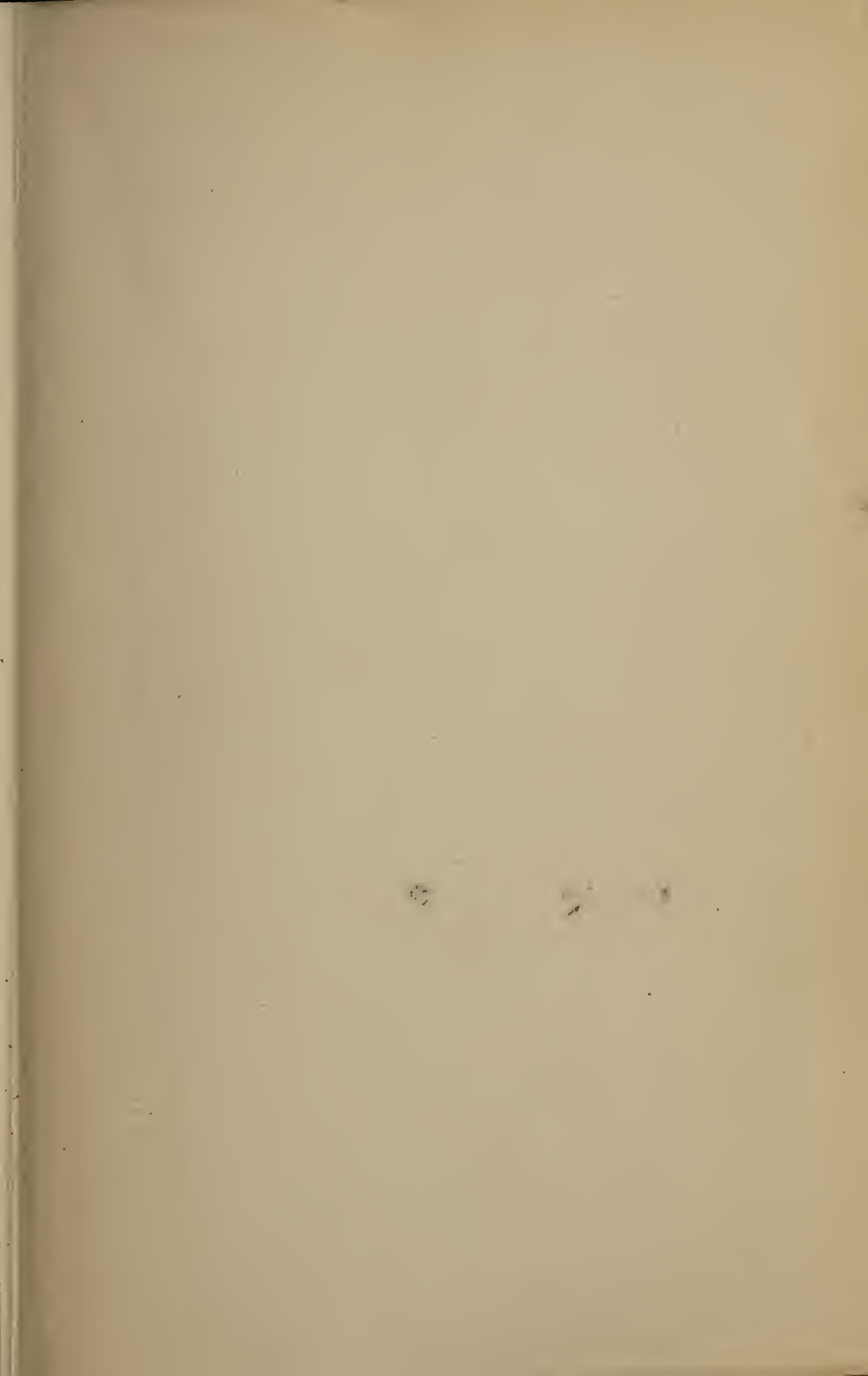
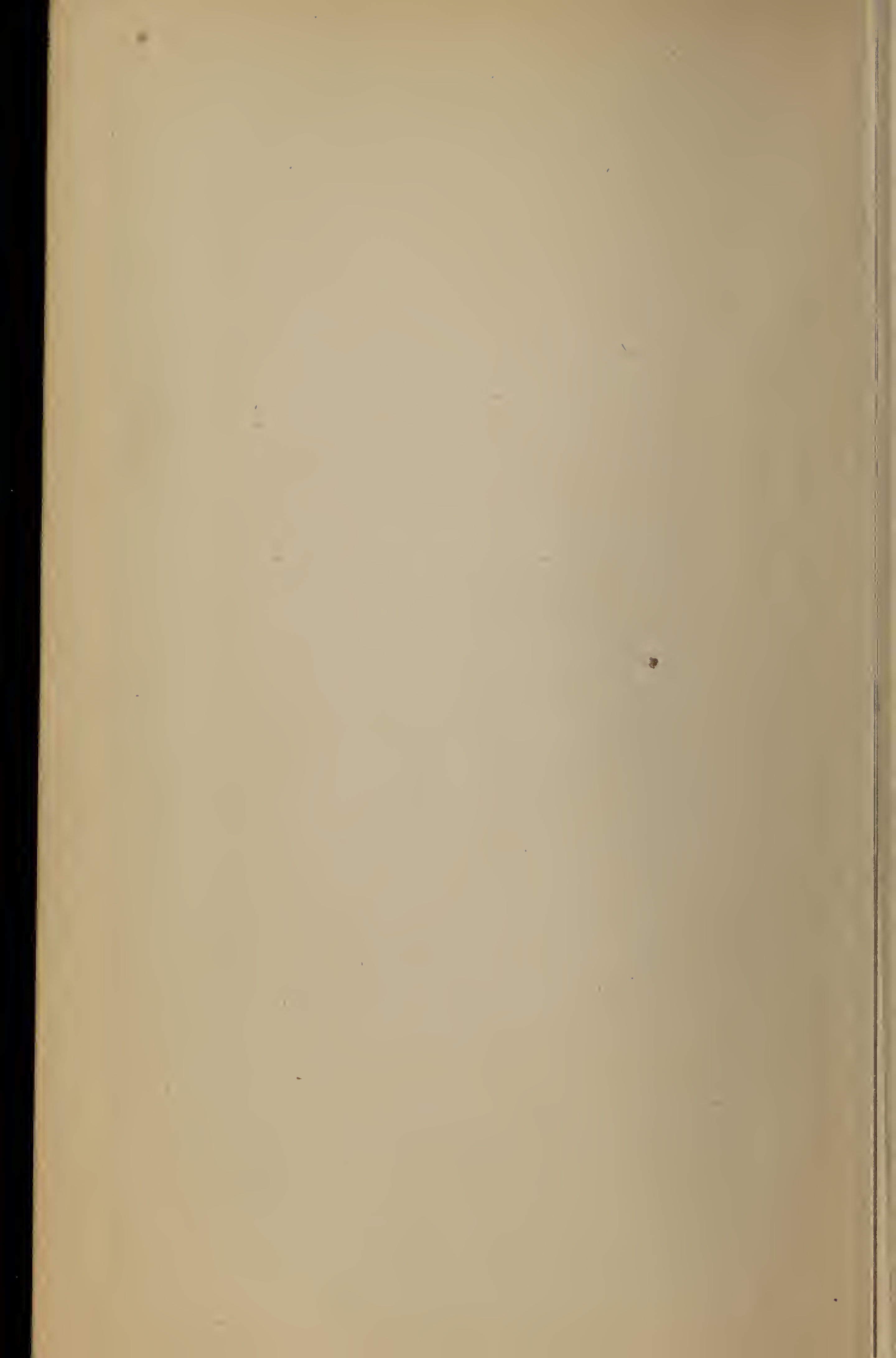



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Voyages from Montreal through the Continent of North America

to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in 1789 and 1793

with an account of the rise and state of the fur trade

BY

Alexander Mackenzie

WITH MAP

IN TWO VOLUMES

Volume I

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INTRODUCTION

Champlain had pushed as far as Lake Huron and the Georgian Bay. Before the end of the seventeenth century French explorers had reached the western end of Lake Superior; La Salle had set up the lilies of France at the mouth of the Mississippi; Radisson had gone overland to James Bay.*

In the eighteenth century began the exploration of the western plains, in which the first great name is that of a native-born Canadian, Pierre Gualtier de la Vérendrye.

Born at Three Rivers in 1685, La Vérendrye early entered the army, saw service in Flanders and was left for dead on the field of Malplaquet. Returning to Canada he took to the fur trade, and from 1731 on he and his heroic sons made journey after journey to the westward. In 1737 he built a fort on the site where is now the city of Winnipeg, and in 1742-3 an expedition under his son Pierre reached the lodges of the Mandans on the Upper Missouri, and saw rise into view the

*Justin Winsor, *Geographical Discovery in the Interior of North America, 1534-1698*, and Lawrence J. Burpee, *The Search for the Western Sea*, give good accounts of the gradual exploration of the continent.

jagged line of the Rockies. But lack of guides compelled the young explorer to turn back, and the death of La Vérendrye in 1749 left the mountain barrier still unpierced.

With the expulsion of France from the continent of North America in 1763, the Hudson's Bay Company, which had hitherto confined its operations to the neighborhood of Hudson Bay, began to send trading and exploring parties inland, which gathered such large profits that in 1783-4 the merchants of Montreal founded in opposition the Northwest Fur-Trading Company. The chief factories of the older company were on Hudson Bay, whence the furs were shipped by water to England, but the partners of the Northwest Company, most of whom were young and energetic Scotchmen, brought their furs from inland posts to Montreal by many a winding river and toilsome portage, and so added impetus to exploration. Among their employees was Alexander Mackenzie, a sturdy young highlander, born at Stornoway in the island of Lewis in 1763. After some years in the counting-house at Montreal, and a year at Detroit, Mackenzie came west, and was stationed at Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca. Hence on June 3, 1789, he started northward with a small party of Indians; on July 13th he reached the mouth of the great

river which bears his name; on Sept. 12th he was back at his post. Three years later he essayed an even bolder journey. On Oct. 10, 1792, he set out along the valley of the Peace, and wintered near the mouth of Smoky River; in the spring he struggled on to the Fraser, but after descending it for some distance left it for a last dash across country, and after a thousand perils splendidly surmounted by himself and his French-Canadian *Voyageurs,* on July 20, 1793, he came out on the shores of the Pacific. (See vol. ii., p. 282.) The problem of Cartier, of Champlain, of La Vérendrye was solved at last; the continent had been crossed; the great South Sea was won. Agamemnon's was a small heroism compared to that of this Scottish fur-trader.

Mackenzie's later life was prosperous and turbulent. He returned with a competence to London, where in 1801 he published his voyages in a large quarto volume, dedicated to King George III. In the following year he was knighted. Soon afterward he returned to Canada, and was a prominent member of the X. Y. Co., which was for some years a vigorous rival of the older companies, but which in 1804-5 united with the North-west Company. He was elected to the parliament of Lower Canada as member for Hunt-

ingdon, but made no special mark. A few years later he retired to Scotland, married and bought an estate in Rosshire, on which he resided till his death in March, 1820.

W. L. Grant.

Preface.

On presenting this Volume to my Country, it is not necessary to enter into a particular account of those voyages whose journals form the principal part of it, as they will be found, I trust, to explain themselves. It appears, however, to be a duty, which the Public have a right to expect from me, to state the reasons which have influenced me in delaying the publication of them.

It has been asserted, that a misunderstanding between a person high in office and myself, was the cause of this procrastination. It has also been propagated, that it was occasioned by that precaution which the policy of commerce will sometimes suggest; but they are both equally devoid of foundation. The one is an idle tale; and there could be no solid reason for concealing the circumstances of discoveries, whose arrangements and prosecution were so honourable to my associates and myself, at whose expense they were undertaken. The delay actually arose from the very active and busy mode of life in which I was engaged since the voyages have been completed; and when, at length, the opportunity arrived, the apprehension of pre-

senting myself to the Public in the character of an Author, for which the course and occupations of my life have by no means qualified me, made me hesitate in committing my papers to the Press; being much better calculated to perform the voyages, arduous as they might be, than to write an account of them. However, they are now offered to the Public with the submission that becomes me.

I was led, at an early period of life, by commercial views, to the country North-West of Lake Superior, in North America, and being endowed by Nature with an inquisitive mind and enterprising spirit; possessing also a constitution and frame of body equal to the most arduous undertakings, and being familiar with toilsome exertions in the prosecution of mercantile pursuits, I not only contemplated the practicability of penetrating across the continent of America, but was confident in the qualifications, as I was animated by the desire, to undertake the perilous enterprise.

The general utility of such a discovery, has been universally acknowledged; while the wishes of my particular friends and commercial associates, that I should proceed in the pursuit of it, contributed to quicken the execution of this favourite project of my own ambition: and as the completion of it extends the boundaries of geographic science, and adds new countries to the realms of British

commerce, the dangers I have encountered, and the toils I have suffered, have found their recompence; nor will the many tedious and weary days, or the gloomy and inclement nights which I have passed, have been passed in vain.

The first voyage has settled the dubious point of a practicable North-West passage; and I trust it has set that long agitated question at rest, and extinguished the disputes respecting it for ever. An enlarged discussion of that subject will be found to occupy the concluding pages of this volume.

In this voyage, I was not only without the necessary books and instruments, but also felt myself deficient in the sciences of astronomy and navigation; I did not hesitate, therefore, to undertake a winter's voyage to this country, in order to procure the one, and acquire the other. These objects being accomplished, I returned, to determine the practicability of a commercial communication through the continent of North America, between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, which is proved by my second journal. Nor do I hesitate to declare my decided opinion, that very great and essential advantages may be derived by extending our trade from one sea to the other.

Some account of the fur trade of Canada from that country, of the native inhabitants,

and of the extensive districts connected with it, forms a preliminary discourse, which will, I trust, prove interesting to a nation, whose general policy is blended with, and whose prosperity is supported by, the pursuits of commerce. It will also qualify the reader to pursue the succeeding voyages with superior intelligence and satisfaction.

These voyages will not, I fear, afford the variety that may be expected from them; and that which they offered to the eye, is not of a nature to be effectually transferred to the page. Mountains and valleys, the dreary waste, and the wide-spreading forests, the lakes and rivers succeed each other in general description; and, except on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean, where the villages were permanent, and the inhabitants in a great measure stationary, small bands of wandering Indians are the only people whom I shall introduce to the acquaintance of my readers.

The beaver and the buffalo, the moose-deer and the elk, which are the principal animals to be found in these countries, are already so familiar to the naturalists of Europe, and have been so often as well as correctly described in their works, that the bare mention of them, as they enlivened the landscape, or were hunted for food; with a cursory account of the soil, the course and navigation of lakes and rivers, and their various produce,

is all that can be reasonably expected from me.

I do not possess the science of the naturalist; and even if the qualifications of that character had been attained by me, its curious spirit would not have been gratified. I could not stop to dig into the earth, over whose surface I was compelled to pass with rapid steps; nor could I turn aside to collect the plants which nature might have scattered on the way, when my thoughts were anxiously employed in making provision for the day that was passing over me. I had to encounter perils by land and perils by water; to watch the savage who was our guide, or to guard against those of his tribe who might meditate our destruction. I had, also, the passions and fears of others to control and subdue. To-day, I had to assuage the rising discontents, and on the morrow, to cheer the fainting spirits of the people who accompanied me. The toil of our navigation was incessant, and oftentimes extreme; and in our progress over land, we had no protection from the severity of the elements, and possessed no accommodations or conveniences but such as could be contained in the burden on our shoulders, which aggravated the toils of our march, and added to the wearisomeness of our way.

Though the events which compose my

journals may have little in themselves to strike the imagination of those who love to be astonished, or to gratify the curiosity of such as are enamoured of romantic adventures; nevertheless, when it is considered, that I explored those waters which had never before borne any other vessel than the canoe of the savage; and traversed those deserts where an European had never before presented himself to the eye of its swarthy natives; when to these considerations are added the important objects which were pursued, with the dangers that were encountered, and the difficulties that were surmounted to attain them, this work will, I flatter myself, be found to excite an interest, and conciliate regard, in the minds of those who peruse it.

The general map which illustrates this volume, is reduced by Mr. Arrowsmith from his three-sheet map of North America, with the latest discoveries, which he is about to republish. His professional abilities are well known, and no encomium of mine will advance the general and merited opinion of them.

Before I conclude, I must beg leave to inform my readers, that they are not to expect the charms of embellished narrative, or animated description; the approbation due to simplicity and to truth, is all I presume to claim; and I am not without the hope that this claim will be allowed me. I have de-

scribed whatever I saw with the impressions of the moment which presented it to me. The successive circumstances of my progress are related without exaggeration or display. I have seldom allowed myself to wander into conjecture; and whenever conjecture has been indulged, it will be found, I trust, to be accompanied with the temper of a man who is not disposed to think too highly of himself: and if, at any time, I have delivered myself with confidence, it will appear, I hope, to be on those subjects, which, from the habits and experience of my life, will justify an unreserved communication of my opinions. I am not a candidate for literary fame; at the same time, I cannot but indulge the hope that this volume, with all its imperfections, will not be thought unworthy the attention of the scientific geographer; and that, by unfolding countries hitherto unexplored, and which, I presume, may now be considered as a part of the British dominions, it will be received as a faithful tribute to the prosperity of my country.

ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

London,
November 30, 1801.

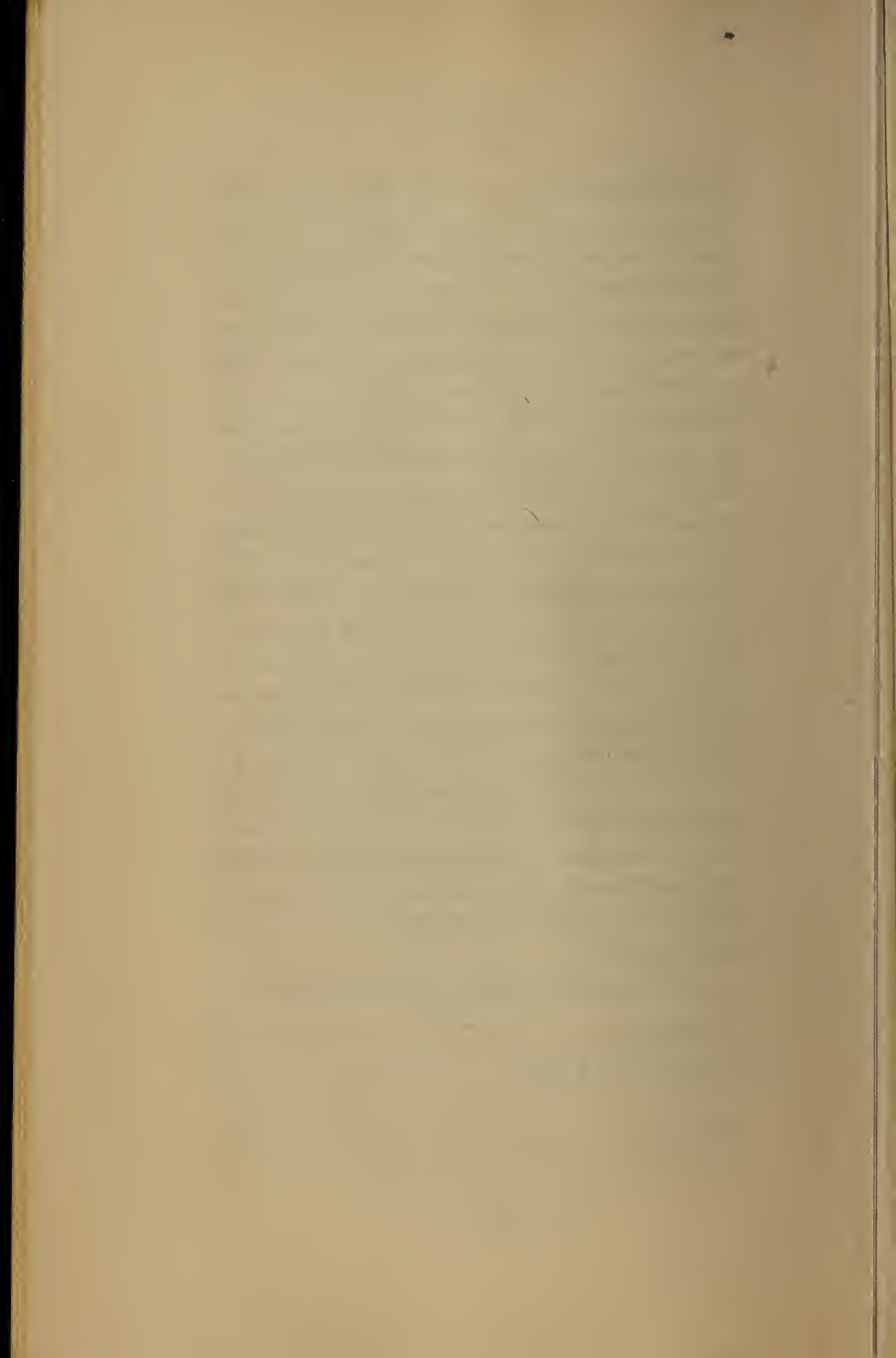


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A GENERAL HISTORY
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FUR TRADE FROM CANADA TO THE NORTH-WEST.

The fur trade, from the earliest settlement of Canada, was considered of the first importance to that colony. The country was then so populous, that, in the vicinity of the establishments, the animals whose skins were precious, in a commercial view, soon became very scarce, if not altogether extinct. They were, it is true, hunted at former periods, but merely for food and clothing. The Indians, therefore, to procure the necessary supply, were encouraged to penetrate into the country, and were generally accompanied by some of the Canadians, who found means to induce the remotest tribes of natives to bring the skins which were most in demand, to their settlements, in the way of trade.

It is not necessary for me to examine the cause, but experience proves that it requires much less time for a civilized people to deviate into the manners and customs of savage life, than for savages to rise into a state of civilisation. Such was the event with those

who thus accompanied the natives on their hunting and trading excursions; for they became so attached to the Indian mode of life, that they lost all relish for their former habits and native homes. Hence they derived the title of *Coureurs des Bois*, became a kind of pedlars, and were extremely useful to the merchants engaged in the fur trade; who gave them the necessary credit to proceed on their commercial undertakings. Three or four of these people would join their stock, put their property into a birch-bark canoe, which they worked themselves, and either accompanied the natives in their excursions, or went at once to the country where they knew they were to hunt. At length, these voyages extended to twelve or fifteen months, when they returned with rich cargoes of furs, and followed by great numbers of the natives. During the short time requisite to settle their accounts with the merchants, and procure fresh credit, they generally contrived to squander away all their gains, when they returned to renew their favourite mode of life: their views being answered, and their labour sufficiently rewarded, by indulging themselves in extravagance and dissipation, during the short space of one month in twelve or fifteen.

This indifference about amassing property, and the pleasure of living free from all re-

straint, soon brought on a licentiousness of manners which could not long escape the vigilant observation of the missionaries, who had much reason to complain of their being a disgrace to the Christian religion; by not only swerving from its duties themselves, but by thus bringing it into disrepute with those of the natives who had become converts to it; and, consequently, obstructing the great object to which those pious men had devoted their lives. They therefore exerted their influence to procure the suppression of these people, and accordingly, no one was allowed to go up the country to traffic with the Indians, without a license from the government.

At first these permissions were, of course, granted only to those whose character was such as could give no alarm to the zeal of the missionaries: but they were afterwards bestowed as rewards for services, on officers, and their widows; and they, who were not willing or able to make use of them (which may be supposed to be always the case with those of the latter description), were allowed to sell them to the merchants, who necessarily employed the Coureurs des bois, in quality of their agents; and these people, as may be imagined, gave sufficient cause for the renewal of former complaints; so that the remedy proved, in fact, worse than the disease.

At length, military posts were established

at the confluence of the different large lakes of Canada, which, in a great measure checked the evil consequences that followed from the improper conduct of these foresters, and, at the same time, protected the trade. Besides, a number of able and respectable men, retired from the army, prosecuted the trade in person, under their respective licences, with great order and regularity, and extended it to such a distance, as, in those days, was considered to be an astonishing effort of commercial enterprize. These persons and the missionaries having combined their views at the same time, secured the respect of the natives, and the obedience of the people necessarily employed in the laborious parts of this undertaking. These gentlemen denominated themselves commanders, and not traders, though they were entitled to both those characters: and, as for the missionaries, if sufferings and hardships in the prosecution of the great work which they had undertaken, deserved applause and admiration, they had an undoubted claim to be admired and applauded: they spared no labour and avoided no danger in the execution of their important office; and it is to be seriously lamented, that their pious endeavours did not meet with the success which they deserved: for there is hardly a trace to be found beyond the cultivated parts, of their meritorious functions.

The cause of this failure must be attributed to a want of due consideration in the mode employed by the missionaries, to propagate the religion of which they were the zealous ministers. They habituated themselves to the savage life, and naturalized themselves to the savage manners, and, by thus becoming dependent, as it were, on the natives, they acquired their contempt rather than their veneration. If they had been as well acquainted with human nature, as they were with the articles of their faith, they would have known that the uncultivated mind of an Indian must be disposed by much preparatory method and instruction to receive the revealed truths of Christianity, to act under its sanctions, and be impelled to good by the hope of its reward, or turned from evil by the fear of its punishments. They should have begun their work by teaching some of those useful arts which are the inlets of knowledge, and lead the mind by degrees to objects of higher comprehension. Agriculture, so formed to fix and combine society, and so preparatory to objects of superior consideration, should have been the first thing introduced among a savage people: it attaches the wandering tribe to that spot where it adds so much to their comforts; while it gives them a sense of property, and of lasting possession, instead of the uncertain hopes of the chase, and the

fugitive produce of uncultivated wilds. Such were the means by which the forests of Paraguay were converted into a scene of abundant cultivation, and its savage inhabitants introduced to all the advantages of a civilised life.

The Canadian missionaries should have been contented to improve the morals of their own countrymen, so that by meliorating their character and conduct, they would have given a striking example of the effect of religion in promoting the comforts of life to the surrounding savages; and might by degrees have extended its benign influence to the remotest regions of that country, which was the object, and intended to be the scene, of their evangelical labours. But by bearing the light of the Gospel at once to the distance of two thousand five hundred miles from the civilised part of the colonies, it was soon obscured by the cloud of ignorance that darkened the human mind in those distant regions.

The whole of their long route I have often travelled, and the recollection of such a people as the missionaries having been there, was confined to a few superannuated Canadians, who had not left that country since the cession to the English, in 1763, and who particularly mentioned the death of some, and the distressing situation of them all. But if these religious men did not attain the objects of their persevering piety, they were, during

their mission, of great service to the commanders who engaged in those distant expeditions, and spread the fur trade as far West as the banks of the Saskatchiwine river, in 53. North latitude, and longitude 102. West.

At an early period of their intercourse with the savages, a custom was introduced of a very excellent tendency, but is now unfortunately discontinued, of not selling any spirituous liquor to the natives. This admirable regulation was for some time observed, with all the respect due to the religion by which it was sanctioned, and whose severest censures followed the violation of it. A painful penance could alone restore the offender to the suspended rites of the sacrament. The casuistry of trade, however, discovered a way to gratify the Indians with their favourite cordial without incurring the ecclesiastical penalties, by giving, instead of selling it to them.

But notwithstanding all the restrictions with which commerce was oppressed under the French government, the fur trade was extended to the immense distance which has been already stated; and surmounted many most discouraging difficulties, which will be hereafter noticed; while, at the same time, no exertions were made from Hudson's Bay to obtain even a share of the trade of a country, which according to the charter of that company, belonged to it, and, from its prox-

imity, is so much more accessible to the mercantile adventurer.

Of these trading commanders, I understood, that two attempted to penetrate to the Pacific Ocean, but the utmost extent of their journey I could never learn; which may be attributed, indeed, to a failure of the undertaking.

For some time after the conquest of Canada, this trade was suspended, which must have been very advantageous to the Hudson's-Bay Company, as all the inhabitants to the westward of Lake Superior were obliged to go to them for such articles as their habitual use had rendered necessary. Some of the Canadians who had lived long with them, and were become attached to a savage life, accompanied them thither annually, till mercantile adventurers again appeared from their own country, after an interval of several years, owing, as I suppose, to an ignorance of the country in the conquerors, and their want of commercial confidence in the conquered. There were, indeed, other discouragements, such as the immense length of the journey necessary to reach the limits beyond which this commerce must begin; the risk of property; the expenses attending such a long transport; and an ignorance of the language of those who, from their experience, must be necessarily employed as the intermediate agents between them and the natives. But,

notwithstanding these difficulties, the trade, by degrees, began to spread over the different parts to which it had been carried by the French, though at a great risk of the lives, as well as the property of their new possessors, for the natives had been taught by their former allies to entertain hostile dispositions towards the English, from their having been in alliance with their natural enemies the Iroquois; and there were not wanting a sufficient number of discontented, disappointed people, to keep alive such a notion; so that for a long time they were considered and treated as objects of hostility. To prove this disposition of the Indians, we have only to refer to the conduct of Pontiac, at Detroit, and the surprise and taking of Michilimakinac, about this period.

Hence it arose, that it was so late as the year 1766, before which, the trade I mean to consider, commenced from Michilimakinac. The first who attempted it were satisfied to go the length of the river Camenistiquia, about thirty miles to the Eastward of the Grande Portage, where the French had a principal establishment, and was the line of their communication with the interior country. It was once destroyed by fire. Here they went and returned successful in the following spring to Michilimakinac. Their success induced them to renew their journey,

and incited others to follow their example. Some of them remained at Camenistiquia, while others proceeded to and beyond the Grande Portage, which, since that time has become the principal entrepot of that trade, and is situated in a bay, in latitude 48. North, and longitude 90. West. After passing the usual season there, they went back to Michilimakinac as before, and encouraged by the trade, returned in increased numbers. One of these, Thomas Curry, with a spirit of enterprize superior to that of his contemporaries, determined to penetrate to the furthest limits of the French discoveries in that country; or at least till the frost should stop him. For this purpose he procured guides and interpreters, who were acquainted with the country, and with four canoes arrived at Fort Bourbon, which was one of their posts, at the West end of the Cedar Lake, on the waters of the Saskatchiwine. His risk and toil were well recompensed, for he came back the following spring with his canoes filled with fine furs, with which he proceeded to Canada, and was satisfied never again to return to the Indian country.

From this period, people began to spread over every part of the country, particularly where the French had established settlements.

Mr. James Finlay was the first who followed Mr. Curry's example, and with the

same number of canoes, arrived, in the course of the next season, at Nipawee, the last of the French settlements on the bank of the Saskatchiwine river, in latitude nearly 43½. North, and longitude 103. West: he found the good fortune, as he followed, in every respect, the example, of his predecessor.

As may be supposed, there were now people enough ready to replace them, and the trade was pursued with such avidity, and irregularity, that in a few years it became the reverse of what it ought to have been. An animated competition prevailed, and the contending parties carried the trade beyond the French limits, though with no benefit to themselves or neighbours, the Hudson's-Bay Company; who in the year 1774, and not till then, thought proper to move from home to the East bank of Sturgeon Lake, in latitude 53. 56. North, and longitude 102. 15. West, and became more jealous of their fellow subjects; and, perhaps, with more cause, than they had been of those of France. From this period, to the present time, they have been following the Canadians to their different establishments, while, on the contrary, there is not a solitary instance that the Canadians have followed them; and there are many trading posts which they have not yet attained. This, however, will no longer be a mystery, when the nature and policy of the Hudson's-

Bay Company is compared with that which has been pursued by their rivals in this trade. —But to return to my subject.

This competition, which has been already mentioned, gave a fatal blow to the trade from Canada, and, with other incidental causes, in my opinion, contributed to its ruin. This trade was carried on in a very distant country, out of the reach of legal restraint, and where there was a free scope given to any ways or means in attaining advantage. The consequence was not only the loss of commercial benefit to the persons engaged in it, but of the good opinion of the natives, and the respect of their men, who were inclined to follow their example; so that with drinking, carousing, and quarrelling with the Indians along their route, and among themselves, they seldom reached their winter quarters; and if they did, it was generally by dragging their property upon sledges, as the navigation was closed up by the frost. When at length they were arrived, the object of each was to injure his rival traders in the opinion of the natives as much as was in their power, by misrepresentation and presents, for which the agents employed were peculiarly calculated. They considered the command of their employer as binding on them, and however wrong or irregular the transaction, the responsibility rested with the principal

who directed them. This is Indian law. Thus did they waste their credit and their property with the natives, till the first was past redemption, and the last was nearly exhausted; so that towards the spring in each year, the rival parties found it absolutely necessary to join, and make one common stock of what remained, for the purpose of trading with the natives, who could entertain no respect for persons who had conducted themselves with so much irregularity and deceit. The winter, therefore, was one continued scene of disagreements and quarrels. If any one had the precaution or good sense to keep clear of these proceedings, he derived a proportionable advantage from his good conduct, and frequently proved a peacemaker between the parties. To such an height had they carried this licentious conduct, that they were in a continual state of alarm, and were even frequently stopped to pay tribute on their route into the country; though they had adopted the plan of travelling together in parties of thirty or forty canoes, and keeping their men armed; which sometimes, indeed, proved necessary for their defence.

Thus was the trade carried on for several years, and consequently becoming worse and worse, so that the partners, who met them at the Grande Portage, naturally complained of their ill success. But specious reasons were

always ready to prove that it arose from circumstances which they could not at that time control; and encouragements were held forth to hope that a change would soon take place, which would make ample amends for past disappointments.

It was about this time, that Mr. Joseph Frobisher, one of the gentlemen engaged in the trade, determined to penetrate into the country yet unexplored, to the North and Westward, and, in the spring of the year 1775, met the Indians from that quarter on their way to Fort Churchill, at Portage de Traite, so named from that circumstance, on the banks of the Missinipi, or Churchill river, latitude 55. 25. North, longitude 103½. West. It was indeed, with some difficulty that he could induce them to trade with him, but he at length procured as many furs as his canoes could carry. In this perilous expedition he sustained every kind of hardship incident to a journey through a wild and savage country, where his subsistence depended on what the woods and the waters produced. These difficulties, nevertheless, did not discourage him from returning in the following year, when he was equally successful. He then sent his brother to explore the country still further West, who penetrated as far as the lake of Isle a la Crosse, in latitude 55. 26. North, and longitude 108. West.

He, however, never after wintered among the Indians, though he retained a large interest in the trade, and a principal share in the direction of it till the year 1798, when he retired to enjoy the fruits of his labours; and, by his hospitality, became known to every respectable stranger who visited Canada.

The success of this gentleman induced others to follow his example, and in the spring of the year 1778, some of the traders on the Saskatchiwine river, finding they had a quantity of goods to spare, agreed to put them into a joint stock, and gave the charge and management of them to Mr. Peter Pond, who, in four canoes, was directed to enter the English River, so called by Mr. Frobisher, to follow his track, and proceed still further; if possible, to Athabasca, a country hitherto unknown but from Indian report. In this enterprise he at length succeeded and pitched his tent on the banks of the Elk river, by him erroneously called the Athabasca river, about forty miles from the Lake of the Hills, into which it empties itself.

Here he passed the winter of 1778-9; saw a vast concourse of the Knisteneaux and Chepewyan tribes, who used to carry their furs annually to Churchill; the latter by the barren grounds, where they suffered innumerable hardships, and were sometimes even starved to death. The former followed the

course of the lakes and rivers, through a country that abounded in animals, and where there was plenty of fish: but though they did not suffer from want of food, the intolerable fatigue of such a journey could not be easily repaid to an Indian: they were, therefore, highly gratified by seeing people come to their country to relieve them from such long, toilsome, and dangerous journeys; and were immediately reconciled to give an advanced price for the articles necessary to their comfort and convenience. Mr. Pond's reception and success was accordingly beyond his expectation; and he procured twice as many furs as his canoes would carry. They also supplied him with as much provision as he required during his residence among them, and sufficient for his homeward voyage. Such of the furs as he could not embark, he secured in one of his winter huts, and they were found the following season, in the same state in which he left them.

These, however, were but partial advantages, and could not prevent the people of Canada from seeing the improper conduct of some of their associates, which rendered it dangerous to remain any longer among the natives. Most of them who passed the winter at the Saskatchiwine, got to the Eagle hills, where, in the spring of the year 1780, a few days previous to their intended departure, a

large band of Indians being engaged in drinking about their houses, one of the traders, to ease himself of the troublesome importunities of a native, gave him a dose of laudanum in a glass of grog, which effectually prevented him from giving further trouble to any one, by setting him asleep for ever. This accident produced a fray, in which one of the traders, and several of the men were killed, while the rest had no other means to save themselves but by a precipitate flight, abandoning a considerable quantity of goods, and near half the furs which they had collected during the winter and the spring.

About the same time, two of the establishments on the Assiniboin river, were attacked with less justice, when several white men, and a great number of Indians were killed. In short, it appeared, that the natives had formed a resolution to extirpate the traders; and, without entering into any further reasonings on the subject, it appears to be incontrovertible, that the irregularity pursued in carrying on the trade has brought it into its present forlorn situation; and nothing but the greatest calamity that could have befallen the natives, saved the traders from destruction: this was the small-pox, which spread its destructive and desolating power, as the fire consumes the dry grass of the field. The fatal infection spread around with a baneful

rapidity which no flight could escape, and with a fatal effect that nothing could resist. It destroyed with its pestilential breath whole families and tribes; and the horrid scene presented to those who had the melancholy and afflicting opportunity of beholding it, a combination of the dead, the dying, and such as to avoid the horrid fate of their friends around them, prepared to disappoint the plague of its prey, by terminating their own existence.

The habits and lives of these devoted people, which provided not to-day for the wants of to-morrow, must have heightened the pains of such an affliction, by leaving them not only without remedy, but even without alleviation. Naught was left them but to submit in agony and despair.

To aggravate the picture, if aggravation were possible, may be added, the putrid carcases which the wolves, with a furious voracity, dragged forth from the huts, or which were mangled within them by the dogs, whose hunger was satisfied with the disfigured remains of their masters. Nor was it uncommon for the father of a family, whom the infection had not reached, to call them around him, to represent the cruel sufferings and horrid fate of their relations, from the influence of some evil spirit who was preparing to extirpate their race; and to incite them to

baffle death, with all its horrors, by their own poniards. At the same time, if their hearts failed them in this necessary act, he was himself ready to perform the deed of mercy with his own hand, as the last act of his affection, and instantly to follow them to the common place of rest and refuge from human evil.

It was never satisfactorily ascertained by what means this malignant disorder was introduced, but it was generally supposed to be from the Missisouri, by a war party.

The consequence of this melancholy event to the traders must be self-evident; the means of disposing of their goods were cut off; and no furs were obtained, but such as had been gathered from the habitations of the deceased Indians, which could not be very considerable: nor did they look from the losses of the present year, with any encouraging expectations to those which were to come. The only fortunate people consisted of a party who had again penetrated to the Northward and Westward in 1780, at some distance up the Missinipi, or English river, to Lake la Rouge. Two unfortunate circumstances, however, happened to them; which are as follow:

Mr. Wadin, a Swiss gentleman, of strict probity and known sobriety, had gone there in the year 1779, and remained during the

summer of 1780. His partners and others, engaged in an opposite interest, when at the Grande Portage, agreed to send a quantity of goods on their joint account, which was accepted, and Mr. Pond was proposed by them to be their representative to act in conjunction with Mr. Wadin. Two men, of more opposite characters, could not, perhaps, have been found. In short, from various causes, their situations became very uncomfortable to each other, and mutual ill-will was the natural consequence: without entering, therefore, into a minute history of these transactions, it will be sufficient to observe, that, about the end of the year 1780, or the beginning of 1781, Mr. Wadin had received Mr. Pond and one of his own clerks to dinner; and, in the course of the night, the former was shot through the lower part of the thigh, when it was said that he expired from the loss of blood, and was buried next morning at eight o'clock. Mr. Pond, and the clerk, were tried for this murder at Montreal, and acquitted: nevertheless, their innocence was not so apparent as to extinguish the original suspicion.

The other circumstance was this. In the spring of the year, Mr. Pond sent the abovementioned clerk to meet the Indians from the Northward, who used to go annually to Hudson's Bay; when he easily persuaded them to

trade with him, and return back, that they might not take the contagion which had depopulated the country to the Eastward of them: but most unfortunately they caught it here, and carried it with them, to the destruction of themselves and the neighbouring tribes.

The country being thus depopulated, the traders and their friends from Canada, who, from various causes already mentioned, were very much reduced in number, became confined to two parties, who began seriously to think of making permanent establishments on the Missinipi river, and at Athabasca; for which purpose, in 1781-2, they selected their best canoe-men, being ignorant that the small-pox penetrated that way. The most expeditious party got only in time to the Portage la Loche, or Mithy-Ouinigam, which divides the waters of the Missinipi from those that fall into the Elk river, to despatch one canoe strong-handed, and light-loaded, to that country; but, on their arrival there, they found, in every direction, the ravages of the small-pox; so that, from the great diminution of the natives, they returned in the spring with no more than seven packages of beaver. The strong woods and mountainous countries afforded a refuge to those who fled from the contagion of the plains; but they were so alarmed at the surrounding destruction, that they avoided the traders, and were dispirited

from hunting, except for their subsistence. The traders, however, who returned into the country in the year 1782-3, found the inhabitants in some sort of tranquillity, and more numerous than they had reason to expect, so that their success was proportionably better.

During the winter of 1783-4, the merchants of Canada, engaged in this trade, formed a junction of interests, under the name of the North-West Company, and divided it into sixteen shares, without depositing any capital; each party furnishing a proportion or quota of such articles as were necessary to carry on the trade: the respective parties agreeing to satisfy the friends they had in the country, who were not provided for, according to this agreement, out of the proportions which they held. The management of the whole was accordingly entrusted to Messrs. Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher, and Mr. Simon M'Tavish, two distinct houses, who had the greatest interest and influence in the country, and for which they were to receive a stipulated commission in all transactions.

In the spring, two of those gentlemen went to the Grande Portage with their credentials, which were confirmed and ratified by all the parties having an option, except Mr. Peter Pond, who was not satisfied with the share

allotted him. Accordingly he, and another gentleman, Mr. Peter Pangman, who had a right to be a partner, but for whom no provision had been made, came to Canada, with a determination to return to the country, if they could find any persons to join them, and give their scheme a proper support.

The traders in the country, and merchants at Montreal, thus entered into a co-partnership, which, by these means, was consolidated and directed by able men, who, from the powers with which they were entrusted, would carry on the trade to the utmost extent it would bear. The traders in the country, therefore, having every reason to expect that their past and future labours would be recompensed, forgot all their former animosities, and engaged with the utmost spirit and activity, to forward the general interest; so that, in the following year, they met their agents at the Grande Portage, with their canoes laden with rich furs from the different parts of that immense tract of country. But this satisfaction was not to be enjoyed without some interruption; and they were mortified to find that Mr. Pangman had prevailed on Messrs. Gregory and Macleod to join him, and give him their support in the business, though deserted by Mr. Pond, who accepted the terms offered by his former associates.

In the counting-house of Mr. Gregory I

had been five years; and at this period had left him, with a small adventure of goods, with which he had entrusted me, to seek my fortune at Detroit. He, without any solicitation on my part, had procured an insertion in the agreement, that I should be admitted a partner in this business, on condition that I would proceed to the Indian country in the following spring, 1785. His partner came to Detroit to make me such a proposition. I readily assented to it, and immediately proceeded to the Grande Portage, where I joined my associates.

We now found that independent of the natural difficulties of the undertaking, we should have to encounter every other which they, who were already in possession of the trade of the country, could throw in our way, and which their circumstances enabled them to do. Nor did they doubt, from their own superior experience, as well as that of their clerks and men, with their local knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, that they should soon compel us to leave the country to them. The event, however, did not justify their expectations; for, after the severest struggle ever known in that part of the world, and suffering every oppression which a jealous and rival spirit could instigate; after the murder of one of our partners, the laming of another, and the narrow escape of one of our

clerks, who received a bullet through his powder horn, in the execution of his duty, they were compelled to allow us a share of the trade. As we had already incurred a loss, this union was, in every respect, a desirable event to us, and was concluded in the month of July, 1787.

This commercial establishment was now founded on a more solid basis than any hitherto known in the country; and it not only continued in full force, vigour, and prosperity, in spite of all interference from Canada, but maintained at least an equal share of advantage with the Hudson's-Bay Company, notwithstanding the superiority of their local situation. The following account of this self-erected concern will manifest the cause of its success.

It assumed the title of the North-West Company, and was no more than an association of commercial men, agreeing among themselves to carry on the fur trade, unconnected with any other business, though many of the parties engaged had extensive concerns altogether foreign to it. It may be said to have been supported entirely upon credit; for, whether the capital belonged to the proprietor, or was borrowed, it equally bore interest, for which the association was annually accountable. It consisted of twenty shares, unequally divided among the persons con-

cerned. Of these, a certain proportion was held by the people who managed the business in Canada, and were styled agents for the Company. Their duty was to import the necessary goods from England, store them at their own expense at Montreal, get them made up into articles suited to the trade, pack and forward them, and supply the cash that might be wanting for the outfits, for which they received, independent of the profit on their shares, a commission on the amount of the accounts, which they were obliged to make out annually, and keep the adventure of each year distinct. Two of them went annually to the Grande Portage, to manage and transact the business there, and on the communication at Detroit, Michilimakinac, St. Mary's, and at Montreal, where they received, stored, packed up, and shipped the company's furs for England, on which they had also a small commission. The remaining shares were held by the proprietors, who were obliged to winter and manage the business of the concern with the Indians, and their respective clerks, etc. They were not supposed to be under any obligation to furnish capital, or even credit. If they obtained any capital by the trade, it was to remain in the hands of the agents; for which they were allowed interest. Some of them, from their long services and influence, held double

shares, and were allowed to retire from the business at any period of the existing concern, with one of those shares, naming any young man in the company's service to succeed him in the other. Seniority and merit were, however, considered as affording a claim to the succession, which, nevertheless, could not be disposed of without the concurrence of the majority of the concern; who, at the same time, relieved the seceding person from any responsibility respecting the share that he transferred, and accounted for it according to the annual value or rate of the property; so that the seller could have no advantage, but that of getting the share of stock which he retained realised, and receiving for the transferred share what was fairly determined to be the worth of it. The former was also discharged from all duty, and became a dormant partner. Thus, all the young men who were not provided for at the beginning of the contract, succeeded in succession to the character and advantages of partners. They entered into the Company's service for five or seven years, under such expectations, and their reasonable prospects were seldom disappointed: there were, indeed, instances when they succeeded to shares, before their apprenticeship was expired, and it frequently happened, that they were provided for while they were in a state of articled clerkship. Shares

were transferable only to the concern at large, as no person could be admitted as a partner who had not served his time to the trade. The dormant partner indeed might dispose of his interest to any one he chose, but if the transaction was not acknowledged by his associates, the purchaser could only be considered as his agent or attorney. Every share had a vote, and two-thirds formed a majority. This regular and equitable mode of providing for the clerks of the company, excited a spirit of emulation in the discharge of their various duties, and in fact, made every agent a principal, who perceived his own prosperity to be immediately connected with that of his employers. Indeed, without such a spirit, such a trade could not have become so extended and advantageous, as it has been and now is.

In 1788, the gross amount of the adventure for the year did not exceed forty thousand pounds,* but by the exertion, enterprise, and industry of the proprietors, it was brought, in eleven years, to triple that amount and upwards; yielding proportionate profits, and

*This might be properly called the stock of the company, as it included, with the expenditure of the year, the amount of the property unexpended, which had been appropriated for the adventure of that year, and was carried on to the account of the following adventure.

surpassing, in short, any thing known in America.

Such, therefore, being the prosperous state of the company, it, very naturally, tempted others to interfere with the concern in a manner by no means beneficial to the company, and commonly ruinous to the undertakers.

In 1798 the concern underwent a new form, the shares were increased to forty-six, new partners being admitted, and others retiring. This period was the termination of the company, which was not renewed by all the parties concerned in it, the majority continuing to act upon the old stock, and under the old firm; the others beginning a new one; and it now remains to be decided, whether two parties, under the same regulations and by the same exertions, though unequal in number, can continue to carry on the business to a successful issue. The contrary opinion has been held, which if verified, will make it the interest of the parties again to coalesce; for neither is deficient in capital to support their obstinacy in a losing trade, as it is not to be supposed that either will yield on any other terms than perpetual participation.

It will not be superfluous in this place, to explain the general mode of carrying on the fur trade.

The agents are obliged to order the neces-

sary goods from England in the month of October, eighteen months before they can leave Montreal; that is, they are not shipped from London until the spring following, when they arrive in Canada in the summer. In the course of the following winter they are made up into such articles as are required for the savages; they are then packed into parcels of ninety pounds weight each, but cannot be sent from Montreal until the May following; so that they do not get to market until the ensuing winter, when they are exchanged for furs, which come to Montreal the next fall, and from thence are shipped, chiefly to London, where they are not sold or paid for before the succeeding spring, or even as late as June; which is forty-two months after the goods were ordered in Canada; thirty-six after they had been shipped from England, and twenty-four after they had been forwarded from Montreal; so that the merchant, allowing that he has twelve months' credit, does not receive a return to pay for those goods, and the necessary expenses attending them, which is about equal to the value of the goods themselves, till two years after they are considered as cash, which makes this a very heavy business. There is even a small proportion of it that requires twelve months longer to bring round the payment, going to the immense distance it is carried, and from

the shortness of the seasons, which prevents the furs, even after they are collected, from coming out of the country for that period.*

The articles necessary for this trade, are coarse woollen cloths of different kinds; milled blankets of different sizes; arms and ammunition; twist and carrot tobacco; Manchester goods; linens, and coarse sheetings; thread, lines, and twine; common hardware; cutlery and ironmongery of several descriptions; kettles of brass and copper, and sheet-iron; silk and cotton handkerchiefs, hats, shoes, and hose; calicoes and printed cottons, etc., etc., etc. Spirituous liquors and provisions are purchased in Canada. These, and the expense of transport to and from the Indian country, including wages to clerks, interpreters, guides, and canoe-men, with the expense of making up the goods for the

* This will be better illustrated by the following statement:—We will suppose the goods for 1798: The orders for the goods are sent to this country 25th October, 1796; they are shipped from London March, 1797; they arrive in Montreal June, 1797; they are made up in the course of that summer and winter; they are sent from Montreal May, 1798; they arrive in the Indian country, and are exchanged for furs the following winter, 1798-99; which furs come to Montreal September, 1799; and are shipped for London, where they are sold in March and April, and paid for in May or June, 1800.

market, form about half the annual amount against the adventure.

This expenditure in Canada ultimately tends to the encouragement of British manufactory, for those who are employed in the different branches of this business, are enabled by their gains to purchase such British articles as they must otherwise forego.

The produce of the year of which I am now speaking, consisted of the following furs and peltries:

106,000 Beaver skins,	6,000 Lynx skins,
2,100 Bear skins,	600 Wolverine skins,
1,500 Fox skins,	1,650 Fisher skins,
4,000 Kitt Fox skins	100 Rackoon skins,
4,600 Otter skins,	3,800 Wolf skins,
17,000 Musquash skins,	700 Elk skins,
32,000 Marten skins,	750 Deer skins,
1,800 Mink skins,	1,200 Deer skins dressed,

500 Buffalo robes, and a quantity of castorum.

Of these were diverted from the British market, being sent through the United States to China, 13,364 skins, fine beaver, weighing 19,283 pounds; 1,250 fine otters, and 1,724 kitt foxes. They would have found their way to the China market at any rate, but this deviation from the British channel arose from the following circumstance:

An adventure of this kind was undertaken by a respectable house in London, half con-

cerned with the North-West Company, in the year 1792. The furs were of the best kind, and suitable to the market; and the adventurers continued this connexion for five successive years, to the annual amount of forty thousand pounds. At the winding up of the concern of 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, in the year 1797 (the adventure of 1796 not being included, as the furs were not sent to China, but disposed of in London), the North-West Company experienced a loss of upwards of £40,000 (their half), which was principally owing to the difficulty of getting home the produce procured in return for the furs from China, in the East India Company's ships, together with the duty payable, and the various restrictions of that company. Whereas, from America there are no impediments; they get immediately to market, and the produce of them is brought back, and perhaps sold in the course of twelve months. From such advantages, the furs of Canada will no doubt find their way to China by America, which would not be the case if British subjects had the same privileges that are allowed to foreigners, as London would then be found the best and safest market.

But to return to our principal subject. We shall now proced to consider the number of men employed in the concern: viz., fifty clerks, seventy-one interpreters and clerks,

one thousand one hundred and twenty canoe-men, and thirty-five guides. Of these, five clerks, eighteen guides, and three hundred and fifty canoe-men, were employed for the summer season in going from Montreal to the Grande Portage, in canoes, part of whom proceeded from thence to Rainy Lake, as will be hereafter explained, and are called Pork-eaters, or Goers and Comers. These were hired in Canada or Montreal, and were absent from the 1st of May till the latter end of September. For this trip the guides had from eight hundred to a thousand livres, and a suitable equipment; the foreman and steersman from four to six hundred livres; the middle-men from two hundred and fifty to three hundred and fifty livres, with an equipment of one blanket, one shirt, and one pair of trowsers; and were maintained during that period at the expense of their employers. Independent of their wages, they were allowed to traffic, and many of them earned to the amount of their wages. About one-third of these went to winter, and had more than double the above wages and equipment. All the winterers were hired by the year, and sometimes for three years; and of the clerks many were apprentices, who were generally engaged for five or seven years, for which they had only one hundred pounds, provision and clothing. Such of them who could not

be provided for as partners, at the expiration of this time, were allowed from one hundred pounds to three hundred pounds per annum, with all necessaries, till provision was made for them. Those who acted in the two-fold capacity of clerk and interpreter, or were so denominated, had no other expectation than the payment of wages to the amount of from one thousand to four thousand livres per annum, with clothing and provisions. The guides, who are a very useful set of men, acted also in the additional capacity of interpreters, and had a stated quantity of goods, considered as sufficient for their wants, their wages being from one to three thousand livres. The canoe-men are of two descriptions, foremen and steersmen, and middlemen. The two first were allowed annually one thousand two hundred, and the latter eight hundred, livres each. The first class had what is called an equipment, consisting of two blankets, two shirts, two pair of trowsers, two handkerchiefs, fourteen pounds of carrot tobacco, and some trifling articles. The latter had ten pounds of tobacco, and all the other articles: those are called North Men, or Winterers; and to the last class of people were attached upwards of seven hundred Indian women and children, victualled at the expence of the company.

The first class of people are hired in Mon-

treal five months before they set out, and receive their equipments, and one-third of their wages in advance; and an adequate idea of the labour they undergo, may be formed from the following account of the country through which they pass, and their manner of proceeding.

The necessary number of canoes being purchased, at about three hundred livres each, the goods formed into packages, and the lakes and rivers free of ice, which they usually are in the beginning of May, they are then despatched from La Chine, eight miles above Montreal, with eight or ten men in each canoe, and their baggage; and sixty-five packages of goods, six hundred weight of biscuit, two hundred weight of pork, three bushels of pease, for the men's provision; two oil-cloths to cover the goods, a sail, etc., an axe, a towing-line, a kettle, and a sponge to bail out the water, with a quantity of gum, bark, and watape, to repair the vessel. An European on seeing one of these slender vessels thus laden, heaped up, and sunk with her gunwale within six inches of the water, would think his fate inevitable in such a boat, when he reflected on the nature of her voyage; but the Canadians are so expert that few accidents happen.

Leaving La Chine, they proceed to St. Ann's, within two miles of the Western ex-

tremity of the island of Montreal, the lake of the two mountains being in sight, which may be termed the commencement of the Utawas river. At the rapid of St. Ann they are obliged to take out part, if not the whole of their lading. It is from this spot that the Canadians consider they take their departure, as it possesses the last church on the island, which is dedicated to the tutelar saint of voyages.

The lake of the two mountains is about twenty miles long, but not more than three wide, and surrounded by cultivated fields, except the Seignory belonging to the clergy, though nominally in possession of the two tribes of Iroquois and Algonquins, whose village is situated on a delightful point of land under the hills, which, by the title of mountains, give a name to the lake. Near the extremity of the point their church is built, which divides the village in two parts, forming a regular angle along the water side. On the East is the station of the Algonquins, and on the West, one of the Iroquois, consisting in all of about five hundred warriors. Each party has its missionary, and divine worship is performed according to the rites of the Roman Catholic religion, in their respective languages in the same church: and so assiduous have their pastors been, that these people have been instructed in reading

and writing in their own language, and are better instructed than the Canadian inhabitants of the country of the lower ranks: but notwithstanding these advantages, and though the establishment is nearly coeval with the colonisation of the country, they do not advance towards a state of civilisation, but retain their ancient habits, language, and customs, and are becoming every day more depraved, indigent, and insignificant. The country around them, though very capable of cultivation, presents only a few miserable patches of ground, sown by the women with maize and vegetables. During the winter season, they leave their habitations, and pious pastors, to follow the chase, according to the custom of their forefathers. Such is, indeed, the state of all the villages near the cultivated parts of Canada. But we shall now leave them to proceed on our voyage.

At the end of the lake the water contracts into the Utawas river, which, after a course of fifteen miles, is interrupted by a succession of rapids and cascades for upwards of ten miles, at the foot of which the Canadian Seignories terminate; and all above them were waste land, till the conclusion of the American war, when they were surveyed by order of government, and granted to the officers and men of the eighty-fourth regiment, when reduced; but principally to the former,

and consequently little inhabited, though very capable of cultivation.

The voyagers are frequently obliged to unload their canoes, and carry the goods upon their backs, or rather suspended in slings from their heads. Each man's ordinary load is two packages, though some carry three. Here the canoe is towed by a strong line. There are some places where the ground will not admit of their carrying the whole; they then make two trips, that is, leave half their lading, and go and land it at the distance required; and then return for that which was left. In this distance are three carrying-places, the length of which depends in a great measure upon the state of the water, whether higher or lower; from the last of these the river is about a mile and a half wide, and has a regular current for about sixty miles, when it ends at the first Portage de Chaudiere, where the body of water falls twenty-five feet, over cragged, excavated rocks, in a most wild, romantic manner. At a small distance below, is the river Rideau on the left, falling over a perpendicular rock, near forty feet high, in one sheet, assuming the appearance of a curtain; and from which circumstance it derives its name. To this extent the lands have been surveyed, as before observed, and are very fit for culture. Many loyalists are settled upon the river

Rideau, and have, I am told, thriving plantations. Some American families preferring the British territory, have also established themselves along a river on the opposite side, where the soil is excellent. Nor do I think the period is far distant, when the lands will become settled from this vicinity to Montreal.

Over this portage, which is six hundred and forty-three paces long, the canoe and all the lading is carried. The rock is so steep and difficult of access, that it requires twelve men to take the canoe out of the water: it is then carried by six men, two at each end on the same side, and two under the opposite gunwale in the middle. From hence to the next is but a short distance, in which they make two trips to the second Portage de Chaudiere, which is seven hundred paces, to carry the loading alone. From hence to the next and last Chaudiere, or Portage des Chenes, is about six miles, with a very strong current, where the goods are carried seven hundred and forty paces; the canoe being towed up by the line, when the water is not very high. We now enter Lac des Chaudieres, which is computed to be thirty miles in length. Though it is called a lake, there is a strong draught downwards, and its breadth is from two to four miles. At the end of this is the Portage des Chats, over

which the canoe and lading are carried two hundred and seventy-four paces; and very difficult it is for the former. The river is here barred by a ridge of black rock, rising in pinnacles and covered with wood, which, from the small quantity of soil that nourishes it, is low and stinted. The river finds its way over and through these rocks, in numerous channels, falling fifteen feet and upwards. From hence two trips are made through a serpentine channel, formed by the rocks, for several miles, when the current slackens, and is accordingly called the Lac des Chats. To the channels of the grand Calumet, which are computed to be at the distance of eighteen miles, the current recovers its strength, and proceeds to the Portage Dufort, which is two hundred and forty-five paces long; over which the canoe and baggage are transported. From hence the current becomes more rapid, and requires two trips to the Decharge des Sables,* where the goods are carried one hundred and thirty-five paces, and the canoe towed. Then follows the Mountain Portage, where the canoe and lading are also carried three hundred and eighty-five paces; then to the Decharge of

* The place where the goods alone are carried, is called a *Decharge,* and that where goods and canoes are both transported overland, is denominated a *Portage.*

the Derige, where the goods are carried two hundred and fifty paces; and thence to the grand Calumet. This is the longest carrying-place in this river, and is about two thousand and thirty-five paces. It is a high hill or mountain. From the upper part of this Portage the current is steady, and is only a branch of the Utawas river, which joins the main channel, that keeps a more Southern course, at the distance of twelve computed leagues. Six leagues further it forms Lake Coulonge, which is about four leagues in length; from thence it proceeds through the channels of the Allumettes to the decharge, where part of the lading is taken out, and carried three hundred and forty-two paces. Then succeeds the Portage des Allumettes, which is but twenty-five paces, over a rock difficult of access, and at a very short distance from Decharge. From Portage de Chenes to this spot, is a fine deer-hunting country, and the land in many places very fit for cultivation. From hence the river spreads wide, and is full of islands, with some current for seven leagues, to the beginning of *Riviere Creuse*, or Deep River, which runs in the form of a canal, about a mile and a half wide, for about thirty-six miles; bounded upon the North by very high rocks, with low land on the South, and sandy; it is intercepted again by falls and cataracts, so that

the Portages of the two Joachins almost join. The first is nine hundred and twenty-six paces, the next seven hundred and twenty, and both very bad roads. From hence is a steady current of nine miles to the river du Moine, where there has generally been a trading house; the stream then becomes strong for four leagues, when a rapid succeeds, which requires two trips. A little way onward is the Decharge, and close to it, the Portage of the Roche Capitaine, seven hundred and ninety-seven paces in length. From hence two trips are made through a narrow channel of the Roche Capitaine, made by an island four miles in length. A strong current now succeeds, for about six leagues to the Portage of the two rivers, which is about eight hundred and twenty paces; from thence it is three leagues to the Decharge of the Trou, which is three hundred paces. Near adjoining is the rapid of Levellier; from whence, including the rapids of Matawoen, where there is no carrying-place, it is about thirty-six miles to the forks of the same name; in latitude 46. 45. North, and longitude 78. 45. West, and is at the computed distance of four hundred miles from Montreal. At this place the Petite Riviere falls into the Utawas. The latter river comes from a North-Westerly direction, forming several lakes in its course. The principal of them

is Lake Temescamang, where there has always been a trading post, which may be said to continue, by a succession of rivers and lakes, upwards of fifty leagues from the Forks, passing near the waters of the Lake Abbitiby, in latitude 48½, which is received by the Moose River, that empties itself into James's Bay.

The Petite Riviere takes a South-West direction, is full of rapids and cataracts to its source, and is not more than fifteen leagues in length, in the course of which are the following interruptions—The Portage of Plein Champ, three hundred and nineteen paces; the Decharge of the Rose, one hundred and forty-five paces; the Decharge of Campion, one hundred and eighty-four paces; the Portage of the Grosse Roche, one hundred and fifty paces; the Portage of Paresseux, four hundred and two paces; the Portage of Prairie, two hundred and eighty-seven paces; the Portage of La Cave, one hundred paces; Portage of Talon, two hundred and seventy-five paces; which, for its length, is the worst on the communication; Portage Pin de Musique, four hundred and fifty-six paces; next to this, is mauvais de Musique, where many men have been crushed to death by the canoes, and others have received irrecoverable injuries. The last in this river is the Turtle Portage, eighty-three paces, on entering the lake of that name, where, indeed, the river

may be said to take its source. At the first vase from whence to the great river, the country has the appearance of having been over-run by fire, and consists, in general, of huge rocky hills. The distance of this portage which is the height of land, between the waters of the St. Laurance and the Utawas, is one thousand five hundred and thirteen paces to a small canal in a plain, that is just sufficient to carry the loaded canoe about one mile to the next vase, which is seven hundred and twenty-five paces. It would be twice this distance, but the narrow creek is dammed in the beaver fashion, to float the canoes to this barrier, through which they pass, when the river is just sufficient to bear them through a swamp of two miles to the last vase, of one thousand and twenty-four paces in length. Though the river is increased in this part, some care is necessary to avoid rocks and stumps of trees. In about six miles is the lake Nepisingui, which is computed to be twelve leagues long, though the route of the canoes is something more: it is about fifteen miles wide in the widest part, and bound with rocks. Its inhabitants consist of the remainder of a numerous converted tribe, called Nepisinguis of the Algonquin nation. Out of it flows the Riviere des François, over rocks of a considerable height. In a bay to the East of this, the road leads over

the Portage of the Chaudiere des François, five hundred and forty-four paces, to still water. It must have acquired the name of Kettle, from a great number of holes in the solid rock of a cylindrical form, and not unlike that culinary utensil. They are observable in many parts along strong bodies of water, and where, at certain seasons, and distinct periods, it is well known the water inundates; at the bottom of them are generally found a number of small stones and pebbles. This circumstance justifies the conclusion, that at some former period these rocks formed the bed of a branch of the discharge of this lake, although some of them are upwards of ten feet above the present level of the water at its greatest height. They are, indeed, to be seen along every great river throughout this wide extended country. The French river is very irregular, both as to its breadth and form, and is so interspersed with islands, that in the whole course of it the banks are seldom visible. Of its various channels, that which is generally followed by the canoes is obstructed by the following Portages, viz., des Pins, fifty-two paces; Feausille, thirty-six paces; Parisienne, one hundred paces; Recolet, forty-five paces; and the Petite Feusille, twenty-five paces. In several parts there are guts or channels, where the water flows with great velocity,

which are not more than twice the breadth of a canoe. The distance to Lake Huron is estimated at twenty-five leagues, which this river enters in the latitude 45. 53. North, that is, at the point of land three or four miles within the lake. There is hardly a foot of soil to be seen from one end of the Fench river to the other, its banks consisting of hills of entire rock. The coast of the lake is the same, but lower, backed at some distance by high lands. The course runs through numerous islands to the North of West to the river Tessalon, computed to be about fifty leagues from the French river, and which I found to be in latitude 46. 12. 21. North; and from thence crossing, from island to island, the arm of the lake that receives the water of Lake Superior (which continues the same course), the route changes to the South of West ten leagues to the Detour, passing the end of the island of St. Joseph, within six miles of the former place. On that island there has been a military establishment since the upper posts were given up to the Americans in the year 1794; and is the Westernmost military position which we have in this country. It is a place of no trade, and the greater part, if not the whole of the Indians come here for no other purpose but to receive the presents which our government annually allows them. They are from the

American territory (except about thirty families, who are the inhabitants of the lake from the French river, and of the Algonquin nation) and trade in their peltries, as they used formerly to do at Michilimakinac, but principally with British subjects. The Americans pay them very little attention, and tell them that they keep possession of their country by right of conquest: that, as their brothers, they will be friends with them while they deserve it; and that their traders will bring them every kind of goods they require, which they may procure by their industry.

Our commanders treat them in a very different manner, and, under the character of the representative of their father (which parental title the natives give to his present Majesty, the common father of all his people) present them with such things as the actual state of their stores will allow.

How far this conduct, if continued, may, at a future exigency, keep these people in our interest, if they are even worthy of it, is not an object of my present consideration: at the same time, I cannot avoid expressing my perfect conviction, that it would not be of the least advantage to our present or future commerce in that country, or to the people themselves; as it only tends to keep many of them in a state of idleness about our military establishments. The ammunition which

they receive is employed to kill game, in order to procure rum in return, though their families may be in a starving condition: hence it is, that, in consequence of slothful and dissolute lives, their numbers are in a very perceptible state of diminution.

From the Detour to the island of Michilimakinac, at the conference of the Lakes Huron and Michigan, in latitude 45. 54. North is about forty miles. To keep the direct course to Lake Superior, the North shore from the river Tessalon should be followed; crossing to the North-West end of St. Joseph, and passing between it and the adjacent islands, which makes a distance of fifty miles to the fall of St. Mary, at the foot of which, upon the South shore, there is a village, formerly a place of great resort for the inhabitants of Lake Superior, and consequently of considerable trade: it is now, however, dwindled to nothing, and reduced to about thirty families, of the Algonquin nation, who are one half of the year starving, and the other half intoxicated, and ten or twelve Canadians, who have been in the Indian country from an early period of life, and intermarried with the natives, who have brought them families. Their inducements to settle there, was the great quantity of white fish that are to be taken in and about the falls, with very little trouble, particu-

larly in the autumn, when that fish leave the lakes, and comes to the running and shallow waters to spawn. These, when salt can be procured, are pickled just as the frost sets in, and prove very good food with potatoes, which they have of late cultivated with success. The natives live chiefly on this fish, which they hang up by the tails, and preserve throughout the winter, or at least as long as they last; for whatever quantity they may have taken, it is never known that their economy is such as to make them last through the winter, which renders their situation very distressing; for if they had activity sufficient to pursue the labours of the chase, the woods are become so barren of game as to afford them no great prospect of relief. In the spring of the year, they and the other inhabitants make a quantity of sugar from the maple tree, which they exchange with the traders for necessary articles, or carry it to Michilimakinac, where they expect a better price. One of these traders was agent for the North-West Company, receiving, storing, and forwarding such articles as come by the way of the lakes upon their vessels: for it is to be observed, that a quantity of their goods are sent by that route from Montreal in boats to Kingston, at the entrance of Lake Ontario, and from thence in vessels to Niagara, then over land ten miles to a water communica-

tion, by boats, to Lake Erie, where they are again received into vessels, and carried over that lake up the river Detroit, through the lake and river Sinclair to Lake Huron, and from thence to the Falls of St. Mary's, when they are again landed and carried for a mile above the falls, and shipped over Lake Superior to the Grande Portage. This is found to be a less expensive method than by canoes, but attended with more risk, and requiring more time, than one short season of this country will admit; for the goods are always sent from Montreal the preceding fall; and besides, the company get their provisions from Detroit, as flour and Indian corn; as also considerable supplies from Michilimakinac of maple sugar, tallow, gum, etc., etc.

For the purpose of conveying all these things, they have two vessels upon the Lakes Erie and Huron, and one on Lake Superior, of from fifty to seventy tons burden. This being, therefore, the depot for transports, the Montreal canoes, on their arrival, were forwarded over Lake Superior, with only five men in each; the others were sent to Michilimakinac for additional canoes, which were required to prosecute the trade, and then taking a lading there, or at St. Mary's, and follow the others. At length they all arrive at the Grande Portage, which is one hundred

and sixty leagues from St. Mary's, coastways, and situated on a pleasant bay on the North side of the lake, in latitude 48. North, and longitude 90. West from Greenwich, where the compass has not above five degrees East variation.

At the entrance of the bay is an island which screens the harbour from every wind except the South. The shallowness of the water, however, renders it necessary for the vessel to anchor near a mile from the shore, where there is not more than fourteen feet water. This lake justifies the name that has been given to it; the Falls of St. Mary, which is its Northern extremity, being in latitude 46. 31. North, and in longitude 84. West, where there is no variation of the compass whatever, while its Southern extremity, at the river St. Louis, is in latitude 46. 45. North, and longitude 92. 10. West: its greatest breadth is one hundred and twenty miles, and its circumference, including its various bays, is not less than one thousand two hundred miles. Along its North shore is the safest navigation, as it is a continued mountainous embankment of rock, from three hundred to one thousand five hundred feet in height. There are numerous coves and sandy bays to land, which are frequently sheltered by islands from the swell of the lake. This is particularly the case at the distance of one

hundred miles to the Eastward of the Grande Portage, and is called the Pays Plat.

This seems to have been caused by some convulsion of nature, for many of the islands display a composition of lava, intermixed with round stones of the size of a pigeon's egg. The surrounding rock is generally hard, and of a dark blue-grey, though it frequently has the appearance of iron and copper. The South side of the lake, from Point Shagoimigo East, is almost a continual straight line of sandy beach, interspersed with rocky precipices of lime-stones, sometimes rising to a hundred feet in height, without a bay. The embankments from that point Westward are, in general, of strong clay, mixed with stones, which renders the navigation irksome and dangerous. On the same side, at the river Tonnagan, is found a quantity of virgin copper. The Americans, soon after they got possession of that country, sent an engineer thither; and I should not be surprised to hear of their employing people to work the mine. Indeed, it might be well worthy the attention of the British subjects to work the mines on the North coast, though they are not supposed to be so rich as those on the South.

Lake Superior is the largest and most magnificent body of fresh water in the world: it is clear and pellucid, of great

depth, and abounding in a great variety of fish, which are the most excellent of their kind. There are trouts of three kinds, weighing from five to fifty pounds, sturgeon, pickerel, pike, red and white carp, black bass, herrings, etc., etc., and the last, and best of all, the Ticamang, or white fish, which weighs from four to sixteen pounds, and is of a superior quality in these waters.

This lake may be denominated the grand reservoir of the River St. Laurence, as no considerable rivers discharge themselves into it. The principal ones are, the St. Louis, the Nipigon, the Pic, and the Michipicoten. Indeed, the extent of country from which any of them flow, or take their course, in any direction, cannot admit of it, in consequence of the ridge of land that separates them from the rivers that empty themselves into Hudson's-Bay, the gulf of Mexico, and the waters that fall in Lake Michigan, which afterward become a part of the St. Laurence.

This vast collection of water is often covered with fog, particularly when the wind is from the East, which, driving against the high barren rocks on the North and West shore, dissolves in torrents of rain. It is very generally said, that the storms on this lake are denoted by a swell on the preceding day; but this circumstance did not appear from my observation to be a regular phenom-

enon, as the swells more regularly subsided without any subsequent wind.

Along the surrounding rocks of this immense lake, evident marks appear of the decrease of its water, by the lines observable along them. The space, however, between the highest and the lowest, is not so great as in the smaller lakes, as it does not amount to more than six feet, the former being very faint.

The inhabitants that are found along the coast of this water, are all of the Algonquin nation, the whole of which do not exceed 150 families.*

These people live chiefly on fish; indeed, from what has been said of the country, it cannot be expected to abound in animals, as it is totally destitute cf that shelter, which is so necessary to them. The rocks appear to have been over-run by fire, and the stinted timber which once grew there, is frequently seen lying along the surface of them: but it is not easy to be reconciled, that anything

* In the year 1668, when the first missionaries visited the South of this lake, they found the country full of inhabitants. They relate, that about this time a band of the Nepisingues, who were converted, emigrated to the Nipigon country, which is to the North of Lake Superior. Few of their descendants are now remaining, and not a trace of the religion communicated to them is to be discovered.

should grow where there is so little appearance of soil. Between the fallen trees there are briars, with hurtleberry and gooseberry bushes, raspberries, etc., which invite the bears in greater or lesser numbers, as they are a favourite food of that animal: beyond these rocky banks are found a few moose and fallow deer. The waters alone are abundantly inhabited.

A very curious phenomenon was observed some years ago at the Grande Portage, for which no obvious cause could be assigned. The water withdrew with great precipitation, leaving the ground dry that had never before been visible, the fall being equal to four perpendicular feet, and rushing back with great velocity above the common mark. It continued thus falling and rising for several hours, gradually decreasing till it stopped at its usual height. There is frequently an irregular influx and deflux, which does not exceed ten inches, and is attributed to the wind.

The bottom of the bay, which forms an amphitheatre, is cleared of wood and inclosed; and on the left corner of it, beneath an hill, three or four hundred feet in height, and crowned by others of a still greater altitude, is the fort, picketed in with cedar pallisadoes, and inclosing houses built with wood and covered with shingles. They are calculated for every convenience of trade, as well

as to accommodate the proprietors and clerks during their short residence there. The north men live under tents: but the more frugal pork-eater lodges beneath his canoe. The soil immediately bordering on the lake has not proved very propitious, as nothing but potatoes have been found to answer the trouble of cultivation. This circumstance is probably owing to the cold damp fogs of the lake, and the moisture of the ground from the springs that issue from beneath the hills. There are meadows in the vicinity that yield abundance of hay for the cattle; but, as to agriculture, it has not hitherto been an object of serious consideration.

I shall now leave these geographical notices, to give some further account of the people from Montreal.—When they are arrived at the Grande Portage, which is near nine miles over, each of them has to carry eight packages of such goods and provisions as are necessary for the interior country. This is a labour which cattle cannot conveniently perform in summer, as both horses and oxen were tried by the company without success. They are only useful for light, bulky articles; or for transporting upon sledges, during the winter, whatever goods may remain there, especially provision, of which it is usual to have a year's stock on hand.

Having finished this toilsome part of their duty, if more goods are necessary to be transported, they are allowed a Spanish dollar for each package: and so inured are they to this kind of labour, that I have known some of them set off with two packages of ninety pounds each, and return with two others of the same weight, in the course of six hours, being a distance of eighteen miles over hills and mountains. This necessary part of the business being over, if the season be early they have some respite, but this depends upon the time the North men begin to arrive from their winter quarters, which they commonly do early in July. At this period, it is necessary to select from the pork-eaters, a number of men, among whom are the recruits, or winterers, sufficient to man the North canoes necessary to carry, to the river of the rainy lake, the goods and provision requisite for the Athabasca country; as the people of that country (owing to the shortness of the season and length of the road, can come no further), are equipped there, and exchange ladings with the people of whom we are speaking, and both return from whence they came. This voyage is performed in the course of a month, and they are allowed proportionable wages for their services.

The North men being arrived at the Grande Portage, are regaled with bread, pork, butter,

liquor, and tobacco, and such as have not entered into agreements during the winter, which is customary, are contracted with, to return and perform the voyage for one, two, or three years; their accounts are also settled, and such as choose to send any of their earnings to Canada, receive drafts to transmit to their relations or friends; and as soon as they can be got ready, which requires no more than a fortnight, they are again despatched to their respective departments. It is, indeed, very creditable to them as servants, that though they are sometimes assembled to the number of twelve hundred men, indulging themselves in the free use of liquor, and quarrelling with each other, they always show the greatest respect to their employers, who are comparatively but few in number, and beyond the aid of any legal power to enforce due obedience. In short, a degree of subordination can only be maintained by the good opinion these men entertain of their employers, which has been uniformly the case, since the trade has been formed and conducted on a regular system.

The people being despatched to their respective winter-quarters, the agents from Montreal, assisted by their clerks, prepare to return there, by getting the furs across the portage, and re-making them into packages of one hundred pounds weight each, to send

them to Montreal; where they commonly arrive in the month of September.

The mode of living at the Grande Portage is as follows: The proprietors, clerks, guides, and interpreters, mess together, to the number of sometimes an hundred, at several tables, in one large hall, the provision consisting of bread, salt pork, beef, hams, fish, and venison, butter, peas, Indian corn, potatoes, tea, spirits, wine, etc., and plenty of milk, for which purpose several milch cows are constantly kept. The mechanics have rations of such provision, but the canoe-men, both from the North and Montreal, have no other allowance here, or in the voyage, than Indian corn and melted fat. The corn for this purpose is prepared before it leaves Detroit, by boiling it in a strong alkali, which takes off the outer husk: it is then well washed, and carefully dried upon stages, when it is fit for use. One quart of this is boiled for two hours, over a moderate fire, in a gallon of water; to which, when it has boiled a small time, are added two ounces of melted suet; this causes the corn to split, and in the time mentioned makes a pretty thick pudding. If to this is added a little salt, (but not before it is boiled, as it would interrupt the operation) it makes a wholesome, palatable food, and easy of digestion. This quantity is fully sufficient for a man's subsistence during

twenty-four hours; though it is not sufficiently heartening to sustain the strength necessary for a state of active labour. The Americans call this dish hominy.*

The trade from the Grande Portage is, in some particulars, carried on in a different manner with that from Montreal. The canoes used in the latter transport are now too large for the former, and some of about half the size are procured from the natives, and are navigated by four, five, or six men, according to the distance which they have to go. They carry a lading of about thirty-five packages, on an average; of these twenty-three are for the purpose of trade, and the rest are employed for provisions, stores, and baggage. In each of these canoes are a foreman and steersman; the one to be always on the look-out, and direct the passage of the vessel, and the other to attend the helm. They also carry her, whenever that office is necessary. The foreman has the command, and the middle-men obey both; the latter earn only two-thirds of the wages which are paid the two former. Independent of these, a conductor or pilot is appointed to every

* Corn is the cheapest provision that can be procured, though from the expense of transport, the bushel costs about twenty shillings sterling, at the Grande Portage. A man's daily allowance does not exceed ten-pence.

four or six of these canoes, whom they are all obliged to obey; and is, or at least is intended to be, a person of superior experience, for which he is proportionably paid.

In these canoes, thus loaded, they embark at the North side of the portage, on the river Au Tourt, which is very inconsiderable; and after about two miles of a Westerly course, is obstructed by the Partridge Portage, six hundred paces long. In the spring this makes a considerable fall, when the water is high, over a perpendicular rock of one hundred and twenty feet. From thence the river continues to be shallow, and requires great care to prevent the bottom of the canoe from being injured by sharp rocks, for a distance of three miles and an half to the Priarie, or Meadow, when half the lading is taken out, and carried by part of the crew, while two of them are conducting the canoe among the rocks, with the remainder, to the Carreboeuf Portage, three miles and a half more, when they unload, and come back two miles, and embark what was left for the other hands to carry, which they also land with the former; all of which is carried six hundred and eighty paces, and the canoe led up against the rapid. From hence the water is better calculated to carry canoes, and leads by a winding course to the North of West

three miles to the Outard Portage, over which the canoe, and every thing in her, is carried for two thousand four hundred paces. At the further end is a very high hill to descend, over which hangs a rock upwards of seven hundred feet high. Then succeeds the Outard Lake, about six miles long, lying in a North-West course, and about two miles wide in the broadest place.

After passing a very small rivulet, they come to the Elk Portage, over which the canoe and lading are again carried one thousand one hundred and twenty paces; when they enter the lake of the same name, which is an handsome piece of water, running North-West about four miles, and not more than one mile and an half wide.* They then land at the Portage de Cerise, over which, and in the face of a considerable hill, the canoe and cargo are again transported for one thousand and fifty paces. This is only separated from the second Portage de Cerise, by a mud-pond (where there is plenty of water lilies), of a quarter of a mile in length; and this is again separated by a similar pond, from the last Portage de Cerise, which is four hundred and ten paces. Here the same operation is to be performed for three hundred and eighty paces. They next enter on the Mountain

*Here is a most excellent fishery for white fish, which are exquisite.

Lake, running North-West by West six miles long, and about two miles in its greatest breadth. In the centre of this lake, and to the right is the Old Road, by which I never passed, but an adequate notion may be formed of it from the road I am going to describe, and which is universally preferred. This is first, the small new portage over which everything is carried for six hundred and twenty-six paces, over hills and gullies; the whole is then embarked on a narrow line of water, that meanders South-West about two miles and an half. It is necessary to unload here, for the length of the canoe, and then proceed West half a mile, to the new Grande Portage, which is three thousand one hundred paces in length, and over very rough ground, which requires the utmost exertions of the men, and frequently lames them: from hence they approach the Rose Lake, the portage of that name being opposite to the junction of the road from the Mountain Lake. They then embark on the Rose Lake, about one mile from the East end of it, and steer West by South, in an oblique course, across it two miles, then North-West passing the Petite Peche to the Marten Portage three miles. In this part of the lake the bottom is mud and slime, with about three or four feet of water over it; and here I frequently struck a canoe pole of twelve feet long, with-

out meeting any other obstruction than if the whole were water: it has, however, a peculiar suction or attractive power, so that it is difficult to paddle a canoe over it. There is a small space along the South shore, where the water is deep, and this effect is not felt. In proportion to the distance from this part, the suction becomes more powerful: I have, indeed, been told that loaded canoes have been in danger of being swallowed up, and have only owed their preservation to other canoes, which were lighter. I have, myself, found it very difficult to get away from this attractive power, with six men, and great exertion, though we did not appear to be in any danger of sinking.

Over against this is a very high, rocky ridge, on the South side, called Marten Portage, which is but twenty paces long, and separated from the Perche Portage, which is four hundred and eighty paces, by a mud-pond, covered with white lilies. From hence the course is on the lake of the same name, West-South-West three miles to the height of land, where the waters of the Dove or Pigeon River terminate, and which is one of the sources of the great St. Laurence in this direction. Having carried the canoe and lading over it, six hundred and seventy-nine paces, they embark on the lake of Hauteur de Terre, which is in the shape of an horse-

shoe.* It is entered near the curve, and left at the extremity of the Western limb, through a very shallow channel, where the canoe passes half loaded for thirty paces with the current, which conducts these waters till they discharge themselves, through the succeeding lakes and rivers, and disembogues itself, by the river Nelson, into Hudson's-Bay. The first of these is Lac de pierres a fusil, running West-South-West seven miles long, and two wide, and making an angle at North-West one mile more, becomes a river for half a mile, tumbling over a rock, and forming a fall and portage, called the Escalier, of fifty-five paces; but from hence it is neither lake or river, but possesses the character of both, and runs between large rocks, which cause a current or rapid for about two miles and an half, West-North-West, to the portage of the Cheval du Bois. Here the canoe and contents are carried three hundred and eighty paces, between rocks; and within a quarter of a mile is the Portage des Gros Pins, which is six hundred and forty paces over a high ridge. The opposite side of it

* The route which we have been travelling hitherto leads along the high rocky land or bank of Lake Superior on the left. The face of the country offers a wild scene of huge hills and rocks, separated by stony valleys, lakes and ponds. Wherever there is the least soil, it is well covered with trees.

is washed by a small lake three mile round; and the course is through the East end or side of it, three quarters of a mile North-East, where there is a rapid. An irregular meandering channel, between rocky banks, then succeeds, for seven miles and an half, to the Maraboeuf Lake, which extends North four miles, and is three-quarters of a mile wide, terminating by a rapid and decharge of one hundred and eighty paces, the rock of Saginaga being in sight, which causes a fall of about seven feet, and a portage of fifty-five paces.

Lake Saginaga takes its name from its numerous islands. Its greatest length from East to West is about fourteen miles, with very irregular inlets, is nowhere more than three miles wide, and terminates at the small portage of Le Roche, of forty-three paces. From thence is a rocky, stony passage of one mile, to Priarie Portage, which is very improperly named, as there is no ground about it that answers to that description, except a small spot at the embarking place at the West end: to the East is an entire bog; and it is with great difficulty that the lading can be landed upon stages, formed by driving piles into the mud, and spreading branches of trees over them. The portage rises on a stony ridge, over which the canoe and cargo must be carried for six hundred and eleven

paces. This is succeeded by an embarkation on a small bay, where the bottom is the same as has been described in the West end of Rose Lake, and it is with great difficulty that a laden canoe is worked over it, but it does not comprehend more than a distance of two hundred yards. From hence the progress continues through irregular channels, bounded by rocks, in a Westerly course for about five miles, to the little Portage des Couteaux, of one hundred and sixty-five paces, and the Lac des Couteaux, running about South-West by West twelve miles, and from a quarter to two miles wide. A deep bay runs East three miles from the West end, where it is discharged by a rapid river, and after running two miles West, it again becomes still water. In this river are two carrying-places, the one fifteen, and the other one hundred and ninety paces. From this to the Portage des Carpes is one mile North-West, leaving a narrow lake on the East that runs parallel with the Lac des Couteaux, half its length, where there is a carrying-place, which is used when the water in the river last mentioned is too low. The Portage des Carpes is three hundred and ninety paces, from whence the water spreads irregularly between rocks, five miles North-West and South-East to the Portage of Lac Bois Blanc, which is one hundred and eighty paces. Then follows the lake of that name,

but I think improperly so called, as the natives name it the Lac Passeau Minac Sagaigan, or lake of Dry Berries.

Before the small-pox ravaged this country, and completed, what the Nodowasis, in their warfare, had gone far to accomplish, the destruction of its inhabitants, the population was very numerous: this was also a favourite part, where they made their canoes, etc., the lake abounding in fish, the country round it being plentifully supplied with various kinds of game, and the rocky ridges, that form the boundaries of the water, covered with a variety of berries.

When the French were in possession of this country, they had several trading establishments on the islands and banks of this lake. Since that period, the few people remaining, who were of the Algonquin nation, could hardly find subsistence; game having become so scarce, that they depended principally for food upon fish and wild rice, which grows spontaneously in these parts.

This lake is irregular in its form, and its utmost extent from East to West is fifteen miles; a point of land, called Point au Pin, jutting into it, divides it in two parts: it then makes a second angle at the West end, to the lesser Portage de Bois Blanc, two hundred paces in length. This channel is not wide, and is intercepted by several rapids in

the course of a mile: it runs West-North-West to the Portage des Pins, over which the canoe and lading is again carried four hundred paces. From hence the channel is also intercepted by very dangerous rapids, for two miles Westerly, to the point of Pointe du Bois, which is two hundred and eighty paces. Then succeeds the portage of La Croche, one mile more, where the carrying-place is eighty paces, and is followed by an embarkation on that lake, which takes its name from its figure. It extends eighteen miles, in a meandering form, and in a westerly direction; it is in general very narrow, and at about two-thirds of its length becomes very contracted, with a strong current.

Within three miles of the last Portage is a remarkable rock, with a smooth face, but split and cracked in different parts, which hang over the water. Into one of its horizontal chasms a great number of arrows have been shot, which is said to have been done by a war party of the Nadowasis or Sieux, who had done much mischief in this country, and left these weapons as a warning to the Chebois or natives, that, notwithstanding its lakes, rivers, and rocks, it was not inaccessible to their enemies.

Lake Croche is terminated by the Portage de Rideau, four hundred paces long, and derives its name from the appearance of the

water, falling over a rock of upwards of thirty feet. Several rapids succeed, with intervals of still water, for about three miles to the Flacon portage, which is very difficult, is four hundred paces long, and leads to the Lake of La Croix, so named from its shape. It runs about North-West eighteen miles to the Beaver Dam, and then sinks into a deep bay nearly East. The course to the Portage is West by North for sixteen miles more from the Beaver Dam, and into the East bay is a road which was frequented by the French, and followed through lakes and rivers until they came to Lake Superior by the river Caministiquia, thirty miles East of the Grande Portage.

Portage la Croix is six hundred paces long: to the next portage is a quarter of a mile, and its length is forty paces; the river winding four miles to Vermillion Lake, which runs six or seven miles North-North-West, and by a narrow strait communicates with Lake Namaycan, which takes its name from a particular place at the foot of a fall, where the natives spear sturgeon: Its course is about North-North-West and South-South-East, with a bay running East, that gives it the form of a triangle: its length is about sixteen miles to the Nouvelle Portage.

The discharge of the lake is from a bay on the left, and the portage one hundred eighty

paces, to which succeeds a very small river, from whence there is but a short distance to the next Nouvelle Portage, three hundred and twenty paces long. It is then necessary to embark on a swamp, or overflowed country, where wild rice grows in great abundance. There is a channel or small river in the centre of this swamp, which is kept with difficulty, and runs South and North one mile and a half. With deepening water, the course continues North-North-West one mile to the Chaudiere Portage, which is caused by the discharge of the waters running on the left of the road from Lake Namaycan, which used to be the common route, but that which I have described is the safest as well as shortest. From hence there is some current though the water is wide spread, and its course about North by West three miles and an half to the Lac de la Pluie, which lies nearly East and West; from thence about fifteen miles is a narrow strait that divides the lake into two unequal parts, from whence to its discharge is a distance of twenty-four miles. There is a deep bay running North-West on the right, that is not included, and is remarkable for furnishing the natives with a kind of soft, red stone, of which they make their pipes; it also affords an excellent fishery both in the summer and winter; and from it is an easy, safe, and short road to the Lac du Bois,

(which I shall mention presently) for the Indians to pass in their small canoes, through a small lake and on a small river, whose banks furnish abundance of wild rice. The discharge of this lake is called Lac de la Pluie River, at whose entrance there is a rapid below, which is a fine bay, where there had been an extensive picketed fort and building when possessed by the French: the site of it is at present a beautiful meadow, surrounded with groves of oaks. From hence there is a strong current for two miles, where the water falls over a rock twenty feet, and, from the consequent turbulence of the water, the carrying-place, which is three hundred and twenty paces long, derives the name of Chaudiere. Two miles onward is the present trading establishment, situated on an high bank on the North side of the river, in 48. 37. North latitude.

Here the people from Montreal come to meet those who arrive from the Athabasca country, as has been already described, and exchange lading with them. This is also the residence of the first chief, or Sachem, of all the Algonquin tribes, inhabiting the different parts of this country. He is by distinction called Nectam, which implies personal pre-eminence. Here also the elders meet in council to treat of peace or war.

This is one of the finest rivers in the

North-West, and runs a course West and East one hundred and twenty computed miles; but in taking its course and distance minutely I make it only eighty. Its banks are covered with a rich soil, particularly to the North, which, in many parts, are clothed with fine open groves of oak, with the maple, the pine, and the cedar. The Southern bank is not so elevated, and displays the maple, the white birch, and the cedar, with the spruce, the alder, and various underwood. Its waters abound in fish, particularly the sturgeon, which the natives both spear and take with drag-nets. But notwithstanding the promise of this soil, the Indians do not attend to its cultivation, though they are not ignorant of the common process, and are fond of the Indian corn, when they can get it from us.

Though the soil at the fort is a stiff clay, there is a garden, which, unassisted as it is by manure, or any particular attention, is tolerably productive.

We now proceed to mention the Lac du Bois, into which this river discharges itself in latitude 49. North, and was formerly famous for the richness of its banks and waters, which abounded with whatever was necessary to a savage life. The French had several settlements in and about it; but it might be almost concluded, that some fatal circum-

stance had destroyed the game, as war and the small-pox had diminished the inhabitants, it having been very unproductive in animals since the British subjects have been engaged in travelling through it; though it now appears to be recovering its pristine state. The few Indians who inhabit it might live very comfortably, if they were not so immoderately fond of spirituous liquors.

This lake is also rendered remarkable, in consequence of the Americans having named it as the spot, from which a line of boundary, between them and British America, was to run West, until it struck the Mississippi: which, however, can never happen, as the North-West part of the Lac du Bois is in latitude 49. 37. North, and longitude 94.31. West, and the Northernmost branch of the source of the Mississippi is in latitude 47. 38. North, and longitude 95. 6. West, ascertained by Mr. Thomson, astronomer to the North-West Company, who was sent expressly for that purpose in the spring of 1798. He, in the same year, determined the Northern bend of the Mississoury to be in latitude 47. 32. North, and longitude 101. 25. West; and, according to the Indian accounts, it runs to the south of West, so that if the Mississoury were even to be considered as the Mississippi, no Western line could strike it.

It does not appear to me to be clearly de-

termined what course the Line is to take, or from what part of Lake Superior it strikes through the country to the Lac du Bois: were it to follow the principal waters to their source, it ought to keep through Lake Superior to the River St. Louis, and follow that river to its source; close to which is the source of the waters falling into the river of Lac la Pluie, which is a common route of the Indians to the Lac du Bois; the St. Louis passes within a short distance of a branch of the Mississippi, where it becomes navigable for canoes. This will appear more evident from consulting the map: and if the navigation of the Mississippi is considered as of any consequence by this country, from that part of the globe, such is the nearest way to get at it.

But to return to our narrative. The Lac du Bois is, as far as I could learn, nearly round, and the canoe course through the centre of it among a cluster of islands, some of which are so extensive that they may be taken for the mainland. The reduced course would be nearly South and North. But following the navigating course, I make the distance seventy-five miles, though in a direct line it would fall very short of that length. At about two-thirds of it there is a small carrying-place, when the water is low. The carrying-place out of the Lake is on the isl-

and, and named Portage du Rat, in latitude 49. 37. North, and longitude 94. 15. West; it is about fifty paces long. The lake discharges itself at both ends of this island, and forms the River Winipic, which is a large body of water, interspersed with numerous islands, causing various channels and interruptions of portages and rapids. In some parts it has the appearance of lakes, with steady currents; I estimate its winding course to the Dalles eight miles; to the Grand Decharge twenty-five miles and an half, which is a long carrying-place for the goods; from thence to the little Decharge one mile and an half; to the Terre Jaune Portage two miles and an half; then to its galet seventy yards; two miles and three quarters to the Terre Blanche, near which is a fall of from four to five feet; three miles and an half to Portage de L'Isle, where there is a trading-post, and, about eleven miles, on the north shore, a trading establishment, which is the road in boats, to Albany River, and from thence to Hudson's-Bay. There is also a communication with Lake Superior, through what is called the Nipigan country, which enters that Lake about thirty-five leagues East of the Grande Portage. In short, the country is so broken by lakes and rivers, that people may find their way in canoes in any direction they please. It is now four miles

to Portage de L'Isle, which is but short, though several canoes have been lost in attempting to run the rapid. From thence it is twenty-six miles to Jacob's Falls, which are about fifteen feet high; and six miles and an half to the woody point; forty yards from which is another Portage. They both form an high fall, but not perpendicular. From thence to another galet, or rock Portage, is about two miles, which is one continual rapid and cascade; and about two miles further is the Chute a l'Esclave, which is upward of thirty feet. The Portage is long, through a point covered with wood: it is six miles and an half more to the barrier, and ten miles to the Grand Rapid. From thence, on the North side, is a safe road, when the waters are high, through small rivers and lakes, to the Lake du Bonnet, called the Pinnawas, from the man who discovered it: to the White River, so called from its being, for a considerable length, a succession of falls and cataracts, is twelve miles. Here are seven portages, in so short a space, that the whole of them are discernible at the same moment. From this to Lake du Bonnet is fifteen miles more, and four miles across it to the rapid. Here the Pinnawas Road joins, and from thence it is two miles to the Galet du Lac du Bonnet; from this to the Galet du Bonnet one mile and an half; thence to the Portage

of the same name is three miles. This portage is near half a league in length, and derives its name from the custom the Indians have of crowning stones, laid in a circle on the highest rock in the portage, with wreaths of herbage and branches. There have been examples of men taking seven packages of ninety pounds each, at one end of the portage, and putting them down at the other without stopping.

To this another small portage immediately succeeds, over a rock producing a fall. From thence to the fall of Terre Blanche is two miles and an half; to the first portage Des Eaux qui Remuent is three miles; to the next, of the same name, is but a few yards distant; to the third and last, which is a Decharge, is three miles and an half; and from this to the last Portage of the river, one mile and an half; and to the establishment, or provision house, is two miles and an half. Here also the French had their principal inland depot, and got their canoes made.

It is here that the present traders, going to great distances, and where provision is difficult to procure, receive a supply to carry them to the Rainy Lake, or Lake Superior. From the establishment to the entrance of Lake Winipic, is four miles and an half, latitude 50. 37. North.

The country, soil, produce, and climate,

from Lake Superior to this place, bear a general resemblance, with a predominance of rock and water: the former is of the granite kind. Where there is any soil it is well covered with wood, such as oak, elm, ash of different kinds, maple of two kinds, pines of various descriptions, among which are what I call the cypress, with the hickory, ironwood, laird, poplar, cedar, black and white birch, etc., etc. Vast quantities of wild rice are seen throughout the country, which the natives collect in the month of August for their winter stores.* To the North of fifty degrees it is hardly known, or at least does not come to maturity.

Lake Winipic is the great reservoir of several large rivers, and discharges itself by the River Nelson into Hudson's Bay. The first in rotation, next to that I have just described, is the Assiniboin, or Red River, which at the distance of forty miles coastwise, disembogues on the south west side of the Lake Winipic. It alternately receives those two denominations from its dividing, at the distance of about thirty miles from the lake, into two large branches. The Eastern branch, called the Red River, runs in a Southern direction to near the head waters of

* The fruits are, strawberries, hurtleberries, plums, and cherries, hazelnuts, gooseberries, currants, raspberries, poires, etc.

the Mississippi. On this are two trading establishments. The country on either side is but partially supplied with wood, and consists of plains covered with herds of the buffalo and elk, especially on the Western side. On the Eastern side are lakes and rivers, and the whole country is well wooded, level, abounding in beaver, bears, moose-deer, fallow deer, etc., etc. The natives, who are of the Algonquin tribe, are not very numerous, and are considered as the natives of Lake Superior. This country being near the Mississippi, is also inhabited by the Nadowasis, who are the natural enemies of the former; the head of the water being the war-line, they are in a continual state of hostility; and though the Algonquins are equally brave, the others generally out-number them; it is very probable, therefore, that if the latter continue to venture out of the woods, which form their only protection, they will soon be extirpated. There is not, perhaps, a finer country in the world for the residence of uncivilised man, than that which occupies the space between this river and Lake Superior. It abounds in every thing necessary to the wants and comforts of such a people. Fish, venison, and fowl, with wild rice, are in great plenty; while, at the same time, their subsistence requires that bodily exercise so necessary to health and vigour.

This great extent of country was formerly very populous, but from the information I received, the aggregate of its inhabitants does not exceed three hundred warriors; and, among the few whom I saw, it appeared to me that the widows were more numerous than the men. The raccoon is a native of this country, but is seldom found to the Northward of it.

The other branch is called after the tribe of the Nadowasis, who here go by the name of Assiniboins, and are the principal inhabitants of it. It runs from the North-North-West, and in the latitude of 51. 15. West, and longitude 103. 20., rising in the same mountains as the river Dauphin, of which I shall speak in due order. They must have separated from their nation at a time beyond our knowledge, and live in peace with the Algonquins and Knisteneaux.

The country between this and the Red River, is almost a continual plain to the Missisoury. The soil is sand and gravel, with a slight intermixture of earth, and produces a short grass. Trees are very rare; nor are there on the banks of the river sufficient, except in particular spots, to build houses and supply fire-wood for the trading establishments, of which there are four principal ones. Both these rivers are navigable for canoes to their source, without a fall; though in some

parts there are rapids, caused by occasional beds of limestone, and gravel; but in general they have a sandy bottom.

The Assiniboins, and some of the Fall, or Big-bellied Indians, are the principal inhabitants of this country, and border on the river, occupying the centre part of it; that next Lake Winipic, and about its source, being the station of the Algonquins and Knisteneaux, who have chosen it in preference to their own country. They do not exceed five hundred families. They are not beaver hunters, which accounts for their allowing the division just mentioned, as the lower and upper parts of this river have those animals, which are not found in the intermediate district. They confine themselves to hunting the buffalo, and trapping wolves, which cover the country. What they do not want of the former for raiment and food, they sometimes make into pemmican, or pounded meat, while they melt the fat, and prepare the skins in their hair, for winter. The wolves they never eat, but produce a tallow from their fat, and prepare their skins; all which they bring to exchange for arms and ammunition, rum, tobacco, knives, and various baubles, with those who go to traffic in their country.

The Algonquins, and the Knisteneaux, on the contrary, attend to the fur-hunting, so that they acquire the additional articles of

cloth, blankets, etc., but their passion for rum often puts it out of their power to supply themselves with real necessaries.

The next river of magnitude is the river Dauphin, which empties itself at the head of St. Martin's Bay, on the West side of the Lake Winipic, latitude nearly 52. 15. North, taking its source in the same mountains as the last-mentioned river, as well as the Swan and Red-Deer rivers, the latter passing through the lake of the same name, as well as the former, and both continuing their course through the Manitoba Lake, which, from thence, runs parallel with Lake Winipic, to within nine miles of the Red River, and by what is called the river Dauphin, disembogues its waters, as already described, into that lake. These rivers are very rapid, and interrupted by falls, etc., the bed being generally rocky. All this country, to the South branch of the Saskatchiwine, abounds in beaver, moose-deer, fallow-deer, elks, bears, buffaloes, etc. The soil is good, and wherever any attempts have been made to raise the esculent plants, etc., it has been found productive.

On these waters are three principal forts for trade. Fort Dauphin, which was established by the French before the conquest. Red-Deer River, and Swan-River Forts, with occasional detached posts from these. The

inhabitants are the Knisteneaux, from the North of Lake Winipic; and Algonquins from the country between the Red River and Lake Superior; and some from the Rainy Lake: but as they are not fixed inhabitants, their number cannot be determined: they do not, however, at any time exceed two hundred warriors. In general they are good hunters. There is no other considerable river except the Saskatchiwine, which I shall mention presently, that empties itself into the Lake Winipic.

Those on the North side are inconsiderable, owing to the comparative vicinity of the high land that separates the waters coming this way, from those discharging into Hudson's Bay. The course of the lake is about West-North-West and South-South-East, and the East end of it is in 50. 37. North. It contracts at about a quarter of its length to a strait, in latitude 51. 45., and is no more than two miles broad, where the South shore is gained through islands, and crossing various bays to the discharge of the Saskatchiwine, in latitude 53. 15. This lake, in common with those of this country, is bounded on the North with banks of black and grey rock, and on the South by a low level country, occasionally interrupted with a ridge or bank of lime-stones, lying in stratas, and rising to the perpendicular height of from

twenty to forty feet; these are covered with a small quantity of earth, forming a level surface, which bears timber, but of a moderate growth, and declines to a swamp. Where the banks are low, it is evident in many places that the waters are withdrawn, and never rise to those heights which were formerly washed by them.

The inhabitants who are found along this lake are of the Knisteneaux and Algonquin tribes, and but few in number, though game is not scarce, and there is fish in great abundance. The black bass is found there, and no further West; and beyond it no maple trees are seen, either hard or soft.

On entering the Saskatchiwine, in the course of a few miles, the great rapid interrupts the passage. It is about three miles long. Through the greatest part of it the canoe is towed, half or full laden, according to the state of the waters: the canoe and its contents are then carried one thousand one hundred paces. The channel here is near a mile wide, the waters tumbling over ridges of rocks that traverse the river. The South bank is very high, rising upwards of fifty feet, of the same rock as seen on the South side of the Lake Winipic, and the North is not more than a third of that height. There is an excellent sturgeon-fishery at the foot of this cascade, and vast numbers of pelicans,

cormorants, etc., frequent it, where they watch to seize the fish that may be killed or disabled by the force of the waters.

About two miles from this Portage the navigation is again interrupted by the Portage of the Roche Rouge, which is an hundred yards long; and a mile and an half from thence the river is barred by a range of islands, forming rapids between them; and through these it is the same distance to the rapid of Lake Travers, which is four miles right across, and eight miles in length. Then succeeds the Grande Decharge, and several rapids, for four miles to the Cedar Lake, which is entered through a small channel on the left, formed by an island, as going round it would occasion loss of time. In this distance banks of rocks (such as have already been described) appear at intervals on either side; the rest of the country is low. This is the case along the South bank of the lake and the islands, while the North side, which is very uncommon, is level throughout. This lake runs first West four miles, then as much more West-South-West, across a deep bay on the right, then six miles to the Point de Lievre, and across another bay again on the right; then North-West eight miles, across a still deeper bay on the right; and seven miles parallel with the North coast, North-North-West through islands, five miles more

to Fort Bourbon,* situated on a small island, dividing this from Mud Lake.

The Cedar Lake is from four to twelve miles wide, exclusive of the bays. Its banks are covered with wood, and abound in game, and its waters produce plenty of fish, particularly the sturgeon. The Mud Lake, and the neighbourhood of the Fort Bourbon, abound with geese, ducks, swans, etc., and was formerly remarkable for a vast number of martens, of which it cannot now boast but a very small proportion.

The Mud Lake must have formerly been a part of the Cedar Lake, but the immense quantity of earth and sand, brought down by the Saskatchiwine, has filled up this part of it for a circumference whose diameter is at least fifteen or twenty miles: part of which space is still covered with a few feet of water, but the greatest proportion is shaded with large trees, such as the liard, the swamp-ash, and the willow. This land consists of many islands, which consequently form various channels, several of which are occasionally dry, and bearing young wood. It is, indeed, more than probable that this river will, in the course of time, convert the whole of the Cedar Lake into a forest. To the North-West the cedar is not to be found.

*This was also a principal post of the French, who gave it its name.

From this lake the Saskatchiwine may be considered as navigable to near its source in the rocky mountains, for canoes, and without a carrying-place, making a great bend to Cumberland House, on Sturgeon Lake. From the confluence of its North and South branches its course is Westerly; spreading itself, it receives several tributary streams, and encompasses a large tract of country, which is level, particularly along the South branch, but is little known. Beaver, and other animals, whose furs are valuable, are amongst the inhabitants of the North-West branch, and the plains are covered with buffaloes, wolves, and small foxes; particularly about the South branch, which, however, has of late claimed some attention, as it is now understood, that where the plains terminate towards the rocky mountain, there is a space of hilly country clothed with wood, and inhabited also by animals of the fur kind. This has been actually determined to be the case towards the head of the North branch, where the trade has been carried to about the latitude 54. North, and longitude 114. 30. West. The bed and banks of the latter, in some few places, discover a stratum of free-stone; but, in general, they are composed of earth and sand. The plains are sand and gravel, covered with fine grass, and mixed with a small quantity of vegetable earth. This is partic-

ularly observable along the North branch, the West side of which is covered with wood.

There are on this river five principal factories for the convenience of trade with the natives. Nepawi House, South-branch House, Fort-George House, Fort-Augustus House, and Upper Establishment. There have been many others, which, from various causes, have been changed for these, while there are occasionally others depending on each of them.

The inhabitants, from the information I could obtain, are as follow:

At Nepawi and South-Branch House, about thirty tents of Knisteneaux, or ninety warriors; and sixty tents of Stone Indians, or Assiniboins, who are their neighbours, and are equal to two hundred men: their hunting ground extends upwards to about the Eagle Hills. Next to them are those who trade at Forts George and Augustus, and are about eighty tents or upwards of Knisteneaux: on either side of the river, their number may be two hundred. In the same country are one hundred and forty tents of Stone Indians: not quite half of them inhabit the West woody country; the others never leave the plains, and their numbers cannot be less than four hundred and fifty men. At the Southern Head-waters of the North-branch dwells a tribe called Sarsees, consisting of about

thirty-five tents, or one hundred and twenty men. Opposite to those Eastward, on the head-waters of the South Branch, are the Picaneaux, to the number of from twelve to fifteen hundred men. Next to them, on the same water, are the Blood-Indians, of the same nation as the last, to the number of about fifty tents, or two hundred and fifty men. From them downwards extend the Black-Feet Indians, of the same nation as the two last tribes: their number may be eight hundred men. Next to them, and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall, or Big-bellied Indians, who may amount to about six hundred warriors.

Of all these different tribes, those who inhabit the broken country on the North-West side, and the source of the North branch, are beaver-hunters; the others deal in provisions, wolf, buffalo, and fox skins; and many people on the South branch do not trouble themselves to come near the trading establishments. Those who do, choose such establishments as are next to their country. The Stone-Indians here, are the same people as the Stone-Indians, or Assiniboins, who inhabit the river of that name already described, and both are detached tribes from the Nadowasis, who inhabit the Western side of the Mississippi, and lower part of the Mis-

sisoury. The Fall, or Big-bellied Indians, are from the South-Eastward also, and of a people who inhabit the plains from the North bend of the last mentioned river, latitude 47. 32. North, longitude 101. 25. West, to the South bend of the Assiniboin River, to the number of seven hundred men. Some of them occasionally come to the latter river to exchange dressed buffalo robes and bad wolf-skins for articles of no great value.

The Picaneaux, Black-Feet, and Blood-Indians, are a distinct people, speak a language of their own, and, I have reason to think, are travelling North-West, as well as the others just mentioned: nor have I heard of any Indians with whose language that which they speak has any affinity.—They are the people who deal in horses, and take them upon the war-parties towards Mexico; from which, it is evident, that the country to the South-East of them consists of plains, as those animals could not well be conducted through an hilly and woody country, intersected by waters.

The Sarsees, who are but few in number, appear from their language, to come on the contrary from the North-West, and are of the same people as the Rocky-Mountain Indians described in my second journal, who are a tribe of the Chepewyans; and, as for the Knisteneaux, there is no question of their

having been, and continuing to be, invaders of this country, from the Eastward. Formerly, they struck terror into all the other tribes whom they met; but now they have lost the respect that was paid them; as those whom they formerly considered as barbarians are now their allies, and consequently become better acquainted with them, and have acquired the use of fire-arms. The former are still proud without power, and affect to consider the others as their inferiors: those consequently are extremely jealous of them, and, depending upon their own superiority in numbers, will not submit tamely to their insults; so that the consequences often prove fatal, and the Knisteneaux are thereby decreasing both in power and number; spirituous liquors also tend to their diminution, as they are instigated thereby to engage in quarrels which frequently have the most disastrous termination among themselves.

The Stone-Indians must not be considered in the same point of view respecting the Knisteneaux, for they have been generally obliged, from various causes, to court their alliance. They, however, are not without their disagreements, and it is sometimes very difficult to compose their differences. These quarrels occasionally take place with the traders, and sometimes have a tragical conclusion. They generally originate in conse-

quence of stealing women and horses: they have great numbers of the latter throughout their plains, which are brought, as has been observed, from the Spanish settlements in Mexico; and many of them have been seen even in the back parts of this country, branded with the initials of their original owners' names. Those horses are distinctly employed as beasts of burden, and to chase the buffalo. The former are not considered as being of much value, as they may be purchased for a gun, which costs no more than twenty-one shillings in Great Britain. Many of the hunters cannot be purchased with ten, the comparative value of which exceeds the property of any native.

Of these useful animals no care whatever is taken, as when they are no longer employed, they are turned loose winter and summer to provide for themselves. Here, it is to be observed, that the country, in general, on the West and North side of this great river, is broken by the lakes and rivers with small intervening plains, where the soil is good, and the grass grows to some length. To these the male buffaloes resort for the winter, and if it be very severe, the females also are obliged to leave the plains.

But to return to the route by which the progress West and North is made through this continent.

We leave the Saskatchiwine* by entering the river which forms the discharge of the Sturgeon Lake, on whose East bank is situated Cumberland house, in latitude 53. 56. North, longitude 102. 15. The distance between the entrance and Cumberland house is estimated at twenty miles. It is very evident that the mud which is carried down by the Saskatchiwine River, has formed the land that lies between it and the lake, for the distance of upwards of twenty miles in the line of the river, which is inundated during one half of the summer, though covered with wood. This lake forms an irregular horseshoe, one side of which runs to the North-West, and bears the name of Pine-Island Lake, and the other, known by the name already mentioned, runs to the East of North, and is the largest: its length is about twenty-seven miles, and its greatest breadth about six miles. The North side of the latter is the same kind of rock as that described in Lake Winipic, on the West shore. In latitude 54. 16. North, the Sturgeon-Weir River discharges itself into this lake, and its bed

* It may be proper to observe, that the French had two settlements upon the Saskatchiwine, long before, and at the conquest of Canada; the first at the Pasquia, near Carrot River, and the other at Nipawi, where they had agricultural instruments and wheel carriages, marks of both being found about those establishments, where the soil is excellent.

appears to be of the same kind of rock, and is almost a continual rapid. Its direct course is about West by North, and with its windings, is about thirty miles. It takes its waters into the Beaver Lake the South-West side of which consists of the same rock lying in thin stratas: the route then proceeds from island to island for about twelve miles, and along the North shore, for four miles more, the whole being a North-West course to the entrance of a river, in latitude 54. 32. North. The lake, for this distance, is about four or five miles wide, and abounds with fish common to the country. The part of it upon the right of that which has been described, appears more considerable. The islands are rocky, and the lake itself surrounded by rocks. The communication from hence to the Bouleau Lake, alternately narrows into rivers and spreads into small lakes. The interruptions are, the Pente Portage, which is succeeded by the Grand Rapid, where there is a Decharge, the Carp Portage, the Bouleau Portage in latitude 54. 50. North, including a distance, together with the windings, of thirty-four miles, in a Westerly direction. The Lake de Bouleau then follows. This lake might with greater propriety be denominated a canal, as it is not more than a mile in breadth. Its course is rather to the East of North for twelve miles to Portage de

L'Isle. From thence there is still water to Portage d'Epinettes, except an adjoining rapid. The distance is not more than four miles Westerly. After crossing this Portage, it is not more than two miles to Lake Miron, which is in latitude 55. 7. North. Its length is about twelve miles, and its breadth irregular, from two to ten miles. It is only separated from Lake du Chitique, or Pelican Lake, by a short, narrow, and small strait. That lake is not more than seven miles long, and its course about North-West. The Lake des Bois then succeeds, the passage to which is through small lakes, separated by falls and rapids. The first is a Decharge: then follow the three galets, in immediate succession. From hence Lake des Bois runs about twenty-one miles. Its course is South-South-East, and North-North-West, and is full of islands. The passage continues through an intricate, narrow, winding, and shallow channel for eight miles. The interruptions in this distance are frequent, but depend much on the state of the waters. Having passed them, it is necessary to cross the Portage de Traite, or, as it is called by the Indians, Athiquisipichigan Ouinigam, or the Portage of the Stretched Frog Skin, to the Missinipi. The waters already described discharge themselves into Lake Winipic, and augment those of the river Nelson. These

which we are now entering are called the Missinipi, or great Churchill River.

All the country to the South and East of this, within the line of the progress that has been described, is interspersed by lakes, hills, and rivers, and is full or animals, of the fur-kind, as well as the moose-deer. Its inhabitants are the Knisteneaux Indians, who are called by the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, at York, their home-guards.

The traders from Canada succeeded for several years in getting the largest proportion of their furs, till the year 1793, when the servants of that company thought proper to send people amongst them, (and why they did not do it before is best known to themselves), for the purpose of trade, and securing their credits, which the Indians were apt to forget. From the short distance they had to come, and the quantity of goods they supplied, the trade has, in a great measure, reverted to them, as the merchants from Canada could not meet them upon equal terms. What added to the loss of the latter, was the murder of one of their traders by the Indians, about this period. Of these people not above eighty men have been known to the traders from Canada, but they consist of a much greater number.

The Portage de Traite, as has been already hinted, received its name from Mr. Joseph

Frobisher, who penetrated into this part of the country from Canada, as early as the years 1774 and 1775, where he met with the Indians in the spring, on their way to Churchill, according to annual custom, with their canoes full of valuable furs. They traded with him for as many of them as his canoes could carry, and in consequence of this transaction, the Portage received and has since retained its present appellation. He also denominated these waters the English River. The Missinipi is the name which it received from the Knisteneaux, when they first came to this country, and either destroyed or drove back the natives, whom they held in great contempt, on many accounts, but particularly for their ignorance in hunting the beaver, as well as in preparing, stretching, and drying the skins of those animals. And as a sign of their derision, they stretched the skin of a frog, and hung it up at the Portage. This was, at that time, the utmost extent of their conquest or warfaring progress West, and is in latitude 55. 25. North, and longitude 103. 45. West. The river here, which bears the appearance of a lake, takes its name from the Portage, and is full of islands. It runs from East to West about sixteen miles, and is from four to five miles broad. Then succeed falls and cascades which form what is called the grand

rapid. From thence there is a succession of small lakes and rivers, interrupted by rapids and falls, viz., the Portage de Bareel, the Portage de L'Isle, and that of the Rapid River. The course is twenty miles from East-South-East to North-North-West. The Rapid-River Lake then runs West five miles, and is of an oval form. The rapid river is the discharge of Lake la Ronge, where there has been an establishment for trade from the year 1782. Since the small-pox ravaged these parts, there have been but few inhabitants; these are of the Knisteneaux tribe, and do not exceed thirty men. The direct navigation continues to be through rivers and canals, interrupted by rapids; and the distance to the first Decharge is four miles, in a Westerly direction. Then follows Lake de la Montagne, which runs South-South-West three miles and an half, then North six miles, through narrow channels, formed by islands, and continues North-North-West five miles, to the portage of the same name, which is no sooner crossed, than another appears in sight, leading to the Otter Lake, from whence it is nine miles Westerly to the Otter Portage, in latitude 55. 39. Between this and the Portage du Diable, are several rapids, and the distance three miles and an half. Then succeeds the lake of the same name, running from South-East to North-West,

five miles, and West four miles and an half.

There is then a succession of small lakes, rapids, and falls, producing the Portage des Ecors, Portage du Galet, and Portage des Morts, the whole comprehending a distance of six miles, to the lake of the latter name. On the left side is a point covered with human bones, the relics of the small-pox; which circumstance gave the Portage and the lake this melancholy denomination. Its course is South-West fifteen miles, while its breadth does not exceed three miles. From thence a rapid river leads to Portage de Hallier, which is followed by Lake de L'Isle d'Ours: it is, however, improperly called a lake, as it contains frequent impediments amongst its islands, from rapids. There is a very dangerous one about the centre of it, which is named the Rapid qui ne parle point, or that never speaks, from its silent whirlpool-motion. In some of the whirlpools the suction is so powerful, that they are carefully avoided. At some distance from the silent rapid is a narrow strait, where the Indians have painted red figures on the face of a rock, and where it was their custom formerly to make an offering of some of the articles which they had with them, in their way to and from Churchill. The course of this lake, which is very meandering, may be estimated

at thirty-eight miles, and is terminated by the Portage du Canot Tourner, from the danger to which those are subject who venture to run this rapid. From thence a river of one mile and an half North-West course leads to the Portage de Bouleau, and in about half a mile to Portage des Epingles, so called from the sharpness of its stones. Then follows the Lake des Souris, the direction across which is amongst islands, North-West by West six miles. In this traverse is an island, which is remarkable for a very large stone, in the form of a bear, on which the natives have painted the head and snout of that animal; and here they also were formerly accustomed to offer sacrifices. This lake is separated only by a narrow strait from the Lake du Serpent, which runs North-North-West seven miles, to a narrow channel, that connects it with another lake, bearing the same name, and running the same course for eleven miles, when the rapid of the same denomination is entered on the West side of the lake. It is to be remarked here, that for about three or four miles on the North-West side of this lake, there is an high bank of clay and sand, clothed with cypress trees, a circumstance which is not observable on any lakes hitherto mentioned, as they are bounded, particularly on the North, by black and grey rocks. It may also

be considered as a most extraordinary circumstance, that the Chepewyans go North-West from hence to the barren grounds, which are their own country, without the assistance of canoes; as it is well known that in every other part which has been described, from Cumberland House, the country is broken on either side of the direction to a great extent: so that a traveller could not go at right angles with any of the waters already mentioned, without meeting with others in every eight or ten miles. This will also be found to be very much the case in proceeding to Portage la Loche.

The last mentioned rapid is upwards of three miles long, North-West by West; there is, however, no carrying, as the line and poles are sufficient to drag and set the canoes against the current. Lake Croche is then crossed in a Westerly direction of six miles, though its whole length may be twice that distance: after which it contracts to a river that runs Westerly for ten miles, when it forms a bend, which is left to the South, and entering a portion of its waters called the Grass River, whose meandering course is about six miles, but in a direct line not more than half that length, where it receives its waters from the great river, which then runs Westerly eleven miles before it forms the Knee Lake, whose direction is to the North

of West. It is full of islands for eighteen miles, and its greatest apparent breadth is not more than five miles. The portage of the same name is several hundred yards long, and over large stones. Its latitude is 55. 50. and longitude 106. 30. Two miles further North is the commencement of the Croche Rapid, which is a succession of cascades for about three miles, making a bend due South to the Lake du Primeau, whose course is various, and through islands, to the distance of about fifteen miles. The banks of this lake are low, stony, and marshy, whose grass and rushes afford shelter and food to great numbers of wild fowl. At its Western extremity is Portage la Puise, from whence the river takes a meandering course, widening and contracting at intervals, and is much interrupted by rapids. After a Westerly course of twenty miles, it reaches Portage Pellet. From hence, in the course of seven miles, are three rapids, to which succeeds the Shagoina Lake, which may be eighteen miles in circumference. Then Shagoina strait and rapid lead into the Lake of Isle a la Crosse, in which the course is South twenty miles, and South-South-West fourteen miles, to the Point au Sable; opposite to which is the discharge of the Beaver-River, bearing South six miles: the lake in the distance run, does not exceed twelve miles in its greatest

breadth. It now turns West-South-West, the Isle a la Crosse being on the South, and the main land on the North; and it clears the one and the other in the distance of three miles, the water presenting an open horizon to right and left; that on the left formed by a deep narrow bay, about ten leagues in depth; and that to the right by what is called la Riviere Creuse, or Deep River, being a canal of still water, which is here four miles wide. On following the last course, Isle a la Crosse Fort appears on a low isthmus, at the distance of five miles, and is in latitude 55. 25. North, and longitude 107. 48. West.

This lake and fort take their names from the island just mentioned, which, as has been already observed, received its denomination from the game of the cross, which forms a principal amusement among the natives.

The situation of this lake, the abundance of the finest fish in the world to be found in its waters, the richness of its surrounding banks and forests, in moose and fallow deer, with the vast numbers of the smaller tribes of animals, whose skins are precious, and the numerous flocks of wild fowl that frequent it in the spring and fall, make it a most desirable spot for the constant residence of some, and the occasional rendezvous of oth-

ers of the inhabitants of the country, particularly of the Knisteneaux.

Who the original people were that were driven from it, when conquered by the Knisteneaux, is not now known, as not a single vestige remains of them. The latter, and the Chepewyans, are the only people that have been known here; and it is evident that the last-mentioned consider themselves as strangers, and seldom remain longer than three or four years, without visiting their relations and friends in the barren grounds, which they term their native country. They were for some time treated by the Knisteneaux as enemies; who now allow them to hunt to the North of the track which has been described, from Fort du Traite upwards, but when they occasionally meet them, they insist on contributions, and frequently punish resistance with their arms. This is sometimes done at the forts, or places of trade, but then it appears to be a voluntary gift. A treat of rum is expected on the occasion, which the Chepewyans on no other account ever purchase; and those only who have had frequent intercourse with the Knisteneaux have any inclination to drink it.

When the Europeans first penetrated into this country, in 1777, the people of both tribes were numerous, but the small-pox was fatal to them all, so that there does not exist

of the one, at present, more than forty resident families; and the other has been from about thirty to two hundred families. These numbers are applicable to the constant and less ambitious inhabitants, who are satisfied with the quiet possession of a country affording, without risk or much trouble, every thing necessary to their comfort; for since traders have spread themselves over it, it is no more the rendezvous of the errant Knisteneaux, part of whom used annually to return thither from the country of the Beaver River, which they had explored to its source in their war and hunting excursions, and as far as the Saskatchiwine, where they sometimes met people of their own nation, who had prosecuted similar conquests up that river. In that country they found abundance of fish and animals, such as have been already described, with the addition of the buffaloes, who range in the partial patches of meadow scattered along the rivers and lakes. From thence they returned in the spring to their friends whom they had left; and, at the same time met with others who had penetrated with the same designs into the Athabasca country, which will be described hereafter.

The spring was the period of this joyful meeting, when their time was occupied in feasting, dancing, and other pastimes, which

were occasionally suspended for sacrifice, and religious solemnity: while the narratives of their travels, and the history of their wars, amused and animated the festival. The time of rejoicing was but short, and was soon interrupted by the necessary preparations for their annual journey to Churchill, to exchange their furs for such European articles as were now become necessary to them. The shortness of the seasons, and the great length of their way requiring the utmost despatch, the most active men of the tribe, with their youngest women, and a few of their children undertook the voyage, under the direction of some of their chiefs, following the waters already described, to their discharge at Churchill Factory, which are called, as has already been observed, the Missinipi, or Great Waters. There they remained no longer than was sufficient to barter their commodities, with a supernumerary day or two to gratify themselves with the indulgence of spirituous liquors. At the same time the inconsiderable quantity they could purchase to carry away with them, for a regale with their friends, was held sacred, and reserved to heighten the enjoyment of their return home, when the amusements, festivity, and religious solemnities of the spring were repeated. The usual time appropriated to these convivialities being completed, they separated, to

pursue their different objects; and if they were determined to go to war, they made the necessary arrangements for their future operations.

But we must now renew the progress of the route. It is not more than two miles from Isle a la Crosse Fort, to a point of land which forms a cheek of that part of the lake called the Riviere Creuse, which preserves the breadth already mentioned for upwards of twenty miles; then contracts to about two, for the distance of ten miles more, when it opens to Lake Clear, which is very wide, and commands an open horizon, keeping the West shore for six miles. The whole of the distance mentioned is about North-West, when, by a narrow, crooked channel, turning to the South of West, the entry is made into Lake du Boeuf, which is contracted near the middle, by a projecting sandy point; independent of which it may be described as from six to twelve miles in breadth, thirty-six miles long, and in a North-West direction. At the North-West end, in latitude 56. 8. it receives the waters of the river la Loche, which, in the fall of the year, is very shallow, and navigated with difficulty even by half-laden canoes. Its water is not sufficient to form strong rapids, though from its rocky bottom the canoes are frequently in considerable danger. Including its meanders, the

course of this river may be computed at twenty-four miles, and receives its first waters from the lake of the same name, which is about twenty miles long, and six wide; into which a small river flows, sufficient to bear loaded canoes, for about a mile and an half, where the navigation ceases; and the canoes, with their lading, are carried over the Portage la Loche for thirteen miles.

This portage is the ridge that divides the waters which discharge themselves into Hudson's Bay, from those that flow into the Northern ocean, and is in the latitude 56. 20. and longitude 109. 15. West. It runs South-West until it loses its local height between the Saskatchiwine and Elk Rivers; close on the bank of the former, in latitude 53. 36. North, and longitude 113. 45. West, it may be traced in an Easterly direction toward latitude 58. 12. North, and longitude 103½. West, when it appears to take its course due North, and may probably reach the Frozen Seas.

From Lake le Souris, the banks of the rivers and lakes display a smaller portion of solid rock. The land is low and stony, intermixed with a light, sandy soil, and clothed with wood. That of the Beaver River is of a more productive quality: but no part of it has ever been cultivated by the natives or Europeans, except a small garden at the Isle

a la Crosse, which well repaid the labour bestowed upon it.

The Portage la Loche is of a level surface, in some parts abounding with stones, but in general it is an entire sand, and covered with the cypress, the pine, the spruce fir, and other trees natural to its soil. Within three miles of the North-West termination, there is a small round lake, whose diameter does not exceed a mile, and which affords a trifling respite to the labour of carrying. Within a mile of the termination of the Portage is a very steep precipice, whose ascent and descent appears to be equally impracticable in any way, as it consists of a succession of eight hills, some of which are almost perpendicular; nevertheless, the Canadians contrive to surmount all these difficulties, even with their canoes and lading.

This precipice, which rises upwards of a thousand feet above the plain beneath it, commands a most extensive, romantic, and ravishing prospect. From thence the eye looks down on the course of the little river, by some called the Swan river, and by others, the Clear-Water and Pelican river, beautifully meandering for upwards of thirty miles. The valley, which is at once refreshed and adorned by it, is about three miles in breadth, and is confined by two lofty ridges of equal height, displaying a most beautiful

intermixture of wood and lawn, and stretching on till the blue mist obscures the prospect. Some parts of the inclining heights are covered with stately forests, relieved by promontories of the finest verdure, where the elk and buffalo find pasture. These are contrasted by spots where fire has destroyed the woods, and left a dreary void behind it. Nor, when I beheld this wonderful display of uncultivated nature, was the moving scenery of human occupation wanting to complete the picture. From this elevated situation, I beheld my people, diminished, as it were, to half their size, employed in pitching their tents in a charming meadow, and among the canoes, which, being turned upon their sides, presented their reddened bottoms in contrast with the surrounding verdure. At the same time, the process of gumming them produced numerous small spires of smoke, which, as they rose, enlivened the scene, and at length blended with the larger columns that ascended from the fires where the suppers were preparing. It was in the month of September when I enjoyed a scene, of which I do not presume to give an adequate description; and as it was the rutting season of the elk, the whistling of that animal was heard in all the variety which the echoes could afford it.

This river, which waters and reflects such enchanting scenery, runs, including its wind-

ings, upwards of eighty miles, when it discharges itself in the Elk River, according to the denomination of the natives, but commonly called by the white people, the Athabasca River, in latitude 56. 42. North.

At a small distance from Portage la Loche, several carrying-places interrupt the navigation of the river; about the middle of which are some mineral springs, whose margins are covered with sulphureous incrustations. At the junction or fork, the Elk River is about three quarters of a mile in breadth, and runs in a steady current, sometimes contracting, but never increasing its channel, till, after receiving several small streams, it discharges itself into the Lake of the Hills, in latitude 58. 36. North. At about twenty-four miles from the Fork, are some bituminous fountains, into which a pole of twenty feet long may be inserted without the least resistance. The bitumen is in a fluid state, and when mixed with gum, or the resinous substance collected from the spruce fir, serves to gum the canoes. In its heated state it emits a smell like that of sea-coal. The banks of the river, which are there very elevated, discover veins of the same bituminous quality. At a small distance from the Fork, houses have been erected for the convenience of trading with a party of the Knisteneaux, who visit the adjacent country for the purpose of hunting.

At the distance of about forty miles from the lake, is the Old Establishment, which has been already mentioned, as formed by Mr. Pond in the year 1778–9, and which was the only one in this part of the world, till the year 1785. In the year 1788 it was transferred to the Lake of the Hills, and formed on a point on its Southern side, at about eight miles from the discharge of the river. It was named Fort Chepewyan, and is in latitude 58. 38. North, longitude 110. 26. West, and much better situated for trade and fishing as the people here have recourse to water for their support.

This being the place which I made my headquarters for eight years, and from whence I took my departure, on both my expeditions, I shall give some account of it, with the manner of carrying on the trade there, and other circumstances connected with it.

The laden canoes which leave Lake la Pluie about the first of August, do not arrive here till the latter end of September, or the beginning of October, when a necessary proportion of them is despatched up the Peace River to trade with the Beaver and Rocky-Mountain Indians. Others are sent to the Slave River and Lake, or beyond them, and traffic with the inhabitants of that country. A small part of them, if not left at the Fork of the Elk River, return thither for the Kniste-

neaux, while the rest of the people and merchandise remain here, to carry on trade with the Chepewyans.

Here have I arrived with ninety or an hundred men without any provision for their sustenance; for whatever quantity might have been obtained from the natives during the summer, it could not be more than sufficient for the people despatched to their different posts; and even if there were a casual superfluity, it was absolutely necessary to preserve it untouched, for the demands of the spring. The whole dependence, therefore, of those who remained, was on the lake, and fishing implements for the means of our support. The nets are sixty fathom in length, when set, and contain fifteen meshes of five inches in depth. The manner of using them is as follows: A small stone and wooden buoy are fastened to the side-line opposite to each other, at about the distance of two fathoms; when the net is carefully thrown into the water, the stone sinks it to the bottom, while the buoy keeps it at its full extent, and it is secured in its situation by a stone at either end. The nets are visited every day, and taken out every other day to be cleaned and dried. This is a very ready operation when the waters are not frozen, but when the frost has set in, and the ice has acquired its greatest thickness, which is sometimes as much as

five feet, holes are cut in it at the distance of thirty feet from each other, to the full length of the net; one of them is larger than the rest, being generally about four feet square, and is called the basin: by means of them, and poles of a proportionable length, the nets are placed in and drawn out of the water. The setting of hooks and lines is so simple an employment as to render a description unnecessary. The white fish are the principal object of pursuit: they spawn in the fall of the year, and, at about the setting in of the hard frost, crowd in shoals to the shallow water, when as many as possible are taken, in order that a portion of them may be laid by in the frost to provide against the scarcity of winter; as, during that season, the fish of every description decrease in the lakes, if they do not altogether disappear. Some have supposed that during this period they are stationary, or assume an inactive state. If there should be any intervals of warm weather during the fall, it is necessary to suspend the fish by the tail, though they are not so good as those which are altogether preserved by the frost. In this state they remain to the beginning of April, when they have been found as sweet as when they were caught.*

* This fishery requires the most unremitting attention, as the voyaging Canadians are equally indo-

Thus do these voyagers live, year after year, entirely upon fish, without even the quickening flavour of salt, or the variety of any farinaceous root or vegetable. Salt, however, if their habits had not rendered it unnecessary, might be obtained in this country to the Westward of the Peace River, where it loses its name in that of the Slave River, from the numerous salt-ponds and springs to be found there, which will supply in any quantity, in a state of concretion, and perfectly white and clean. When the Indians pass that way they bring a small quantity to the fort, with other articles of traffic.

During a short period of the spring and fall, great numbers of wild fowl frequent this country, which prove a very gratifying food after such a long privation of flesh-meat. It is remarkable, however, that the Canadians who frequent the Peace, Saskatchiwine, and Assiniboin rivers, and live altogether on venison, have a less healthy appearance than those whose sustenance is obtained from the waters. At the same time the scurvy is wholly unknown among them.

In the fall of the year the natives meet the traders at the forts, where they barter the furs or provisions which they may have pro-

lent, extravagant, and improvident, when left to themselves, and rival the savages in a neglect of the morrow.

cured: they then obtain credit, and proceed to hunt the beavers, and do not return till the beginning of the year; when they are again fitted out in the same manner and come back the latter end of March, or the beginning of April. They are now unwilling to repair to the beaver hunt until the waters are clear of ice, that they may kill them with fire-arms, which the Chepewyans are averse to employ. The major part of the latter return to the barren grounds, and live during the summer with their relations and friends in the enjoyment of that plenty which is derived from numerous herds of deer. But those of that tribe who are most partial to these deserts, cannot remain there in winter, and they are obliged, with the deer, to take shelter in the woods during that rigorous season, when they contrive to kill a few beavers, and send them by young men, to exchange for iron utensils and ammunition.

Till the year 1782, the people of Athabasca sent or carried their furs regularly to Fort Churchill, Hudson's Bay; and some of them have, since that time, repaired thither, notwithstanding they could have provided themselves with all the necessaries which they required. The difference of the price set on goods here and at the factory, made it an object with the Chepewyans to undertake a journey of five or six months, in the course

of which they were reduced to the most painful extremities, and often lost their lives from hunger and fatigue. At present, however, this traffic is in a great measure discontinued, as they were obliged to expend in the course of their journey, that very ammunition which was its most alluring object.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE KNISTENEAUX INDIANS.

These people are spread over a vast extent of country. Their language is the same as that of the people who inhabit the coast of British America on the Atlantic, with the exception of the Esquimaux,* and continues along the coast of Labrador, and the gulf and banks of St. Laurence to Montreal. The line then follows the Utawas river to its source; and continues from thence nearly West along the highlands which divides the waters that fall into Lake Superior and Hudson's Bay. It then proceeds till it strikes the middle part of the river Winipic, following that water to the Lake Winipic, to the discharge of the Saskatchiwine into it; from thence it accompanies the latter to Fort George, when the line, striking by the head of the Beaver river to the Elk river, runs along its banks to its discharge in the Lake of the Hills; from which it may be carried

* The similarity between their language and that of the Algonquins is an unequivocal proof that they are the same people. Specimens of their respective tongues will be hereafter given.

back East, to the Isle a la Crosse, and so on to Churchill by the Missinipi. The whole of the tract between this line and Hudson's Bay and Straits (except that of the Esquimaux in the latter), may be said to be exclusively the country of the Knisteneaux. Some of them indeed, have penetrated further West and South to the Red River, to the South of Lake Winipic, and the South branch of the Saskatchiwine

They are of a moderate stature, well proportioned, and of great activity. Examples of deformity are seldom to be seen among them. Their complexion is of a copper colour, and their hair black, which is common to all the natives of North America. It is cut in various forms, according to the fancy of the several tribes, and by some is left in the long, lank, flow of nature. They very generally extract their beards, and both sexes manifest a disposition to pluck the hair from every part of their body and limbs. Their eyes are black, keen, and penetrating; their countenance open and agreeable, and it is a principal object of their vanity to give every possible decoration to their persons. A material article in their toilets is vermilion, which they contrast with their native blue, white, and brown earths, to which charcoal is frequently added.

Their dress is at once simple and commo-

dious. It consists of tight leggins, reaching near the hip: a strip of cloth or leather, called assian, about a foot wide, and five feet long, whose ends are drawn inwards and hang behind and before, over a belt tied round the waist for that purpose: a close vest or shirt reaching down to the former garment, and cinctured with a broad strip of parchment fastened with thongs behind; and a cap for the head, consisting of a piece of fur, or small skin, with the brush of the animal as a suspended ornament: a kind of robe is thrown occasionally over the whole of the dress, and serves both night and day. These articles, with the addition of shoes and mittens, constitute the variety of their apparel. The materials vary according to the season, and consist of dressed moose-skin, beaver prepared with the fur, or European woollens. The leather is neatly painted, and fancifully worked in some parts with porcupine quills, and moose-deer hair: the shirts and leggins are also adorned with fringe and tassels; nor are the shoes and mittens without somewhat of appropriate decoration, and worked with a considerable degree of skill and taste. These habiliments are put on, however, as fancy or convenience suggests; and they will sometimes proceed to the chase in the severest frost, covered only with the slightest of them.

Their head-dresses are composed of the feathers of the swan, the eagle, and other birds. The teeth, horns, and claws of different animals, are also the occasional ornaments of the head and neck. Their hair, however arranged, is always besmeared with grease. The making of every article of dress is a female occupation; and the women, though by no means inattentive to the decoration of their own persons, appear to have a still greater degree of pride in attending to the appearance of the men, whose faces are painted with more care than those of the women.

The female dress is formed of the same materials as those of the other sex, but of a different make and arrangement. Their shoes are commonly plain, and their leggins gartered beneath the knee. The coat, or body covering, falls down to the middle of the leg, and is fastened over the shoulders with cords, a flap or cape turning down about eight inches, both before and behind, and agreeably ornamented with quill-work and fringe; the bottom is also fringed, and fancifully painted as high as the knee. As it is very loose, it is enclosed round the waist with a stiff belt, decorated with tassels, and fastened behind. The arms are covered to the wrist, with detached sleeves, which are sewed as far as the bend of the arm; from thence they are drawn

up to the neck, and the corners of them fall down behind, as low as the waist. The cap, when they wear one, consists of a certain quantity of leather or cloth, sewed at one end, by which means it is kept on the head, and, hanging down the back, is fastened to the belt, as well as under the chin. The upper garment is a robe like that worn by the men. Their hair is divided on the crown, and tied behind, or sometimes fastened in large knots over the ears. They are fond of European articles, and prefer them to their own native commodities. Their ornaments consist in common with all savages, in bracelets, rings, and similar baubles. Some of the women tattoo three perpendicular lines, which are sometimes double: one from the centre of the chin to that of the under lip, and one parallel on either side to the corner of the mouth.

Of all the nations which I have seen on this continent, the Knisteneaux women are the most comely. Their figure is generally well proportioned, and the regularity of their features would be acknowledged by the more civilised people of Europe. Their complexion has less of that dark tinge which is common to those savages who have less cleanly habits.

These people are, in general, subject to few disorders. The lues venera, however, is a

common complaint, but cured by the application of simples, with whose virtues they appear to be well acquainted. They are also subject to fluxes, and pains in the breast, which some have attributed to the very keen and cold air which they inhale; but I should imagine that these complaints must frequently proceed from their immoderate indulgence in fat meat at their feasts, particularly when they have been preceded by long fasting.

They are naturally mild and affable, as well as just in their dealings, not only among themselves, but with strangers.* They are also generous and hospitable, and good-natured in the extreme, except when their nature is perverted by the inflammatory influence of spirituous liquors. To their children they are indulgent to a fault. The father, though he assumes no command over them, is ever anxious to instruct them in all the preparatory qualifications for war and hunting; while the mother is equally attentive to her daughters in teaching them every thing that is considered as necessary to their character and situation. It does not appear that the husband makes any distinction between the children

* They have been called thieves, but when that vice can with justice be attributed to them, it may be traced to their connexion with the civilised people who come into their country to traffic.

of his wife, though they may be the offspring of different fathers. Illegitimacy is only attached to those who are born before their mothers have cohabited with any man by the title of husband.

It does not appear, that chastity is considered by them as a virtue; or that fidelity is believed to be essential to the happiness of wedded life. Though it sometimes happens that the infidelity of a wife is punished by the husband with the loss of her hair, nose, and perhaps life; such severity proceeds from its having been practised without his permission: for a temporary interchange of wives is not uncommon: and the offer of their persons is considered as a necessary part of the hospitality due to strangers.

When a man loses his wife, it is considered as a duty to marry her sister, if she has one; or he may, if he pleases, have them both at the same time.

It will appear from the fatal consequences I have repeatedly imputed to the use of spirituous liquors that I more particularly consider these people as having been, morally speaking, great sufferers from their communication with the subjects of civilised nations. At the same time they were not, in a state of nature, without their vices, and some of them of a kind which is the most abhorrent to cultivated and reflecting man. I shall only ob-

serve, that incest and bestiality are among them.

When a young man marries, he immediately goes to live with the father and mother of his wife, who treat him, nevertheless, as a perfect stranger, till after the birth of his first child: he then attaches himself more to them than his own parents; and his wife no longer gives him any other denomination than that of the father of her child.

The profession of the men is war and hunting, and the more active scene of their duty is the field of battle, and the chase in the woods. They also spear fish, but the management of the nets is left to the women. The females of this nation are in the same subordinate state with those of all other savage tribes, but the severity of their labour is much diminished by their situation on the banks of lakes and rivers, where they employ canoes. In the winter, when the waters are frozen, they make their journeys, which are never of any great length, with sledges drawn by dogs. They are, at the same time, subject to every kind of domestic drudgery; they dress the leather, make the clothes and shoes, weave the nets, collect wood, erect the tents, fetch water, and perform every culinary service; so that when the duties of maternal care are added, it will appear, that the life of these women is an uninterrupted succession

of toil and pain. This, indeed, is the sense they entertain of their own situation; and under the influence of that sentiment, they are sometimes known to destroy their female children, to save them from the miseries which they themselves have suffered. They also have a ready way, by the use of certain simples, of procuring abortions, which they sometimes practise, from their hatred of the father, or to save themselves the trouble which children occasion: and, as I have been credibly informed, this unnatural act is repeated without any injury to the health of the women who perpetrate it.

The funeral rites begin, like all other solemn ceremonials, with smoking, and are concluded by a feast. The body is dressed in the best habiliments possessed by the deceased, or his relations, and is then deposited in a grave lined with branches; some domestic utensils are place on it, and a kind of canopy erected over it. During this ceremony, great lamentations are made, and if the departed person is very much regretted, the near relations cut off their hair, pierce the fleshy part of their thighs and arms with arrows, knives, etc., and blacken their faces with charcoal. If they have distinguished themselves in war, they are sometimes laid on a kind of scaffolding; and I have been informed, that women, as in the East, have

been known to sacrifice themselves to the manes of their husbands. The whole of the property belonging to the departed person is destroyed, and the relations take in exchange for the wearing apparel, any rags that will cover their nakedness. The feast bestowed on the occasion, which is, or at least used to be, repeated annually, is accompanied with eulogiums on the deceased, and without any acts of ferocity. On the tomb are carved or painted the symbols of his tribe, which are taken from the different animals of the country.

Many and various are the motives which induce a savage to engage in war. To prove his courage, or to revenge the death of his relations, or some of his tribe, by the massacre of an enemy. If the tribe feel themselves called upon to go to war, the elders convene the people, in order to know the general opinion. If it be for war, the chief publishes his intention to smoke in the sacred stem at a certain period, to which solemnity, meditation and fasting are required as preparatory ceremonials. When the people are thus assembled, and the meeting sanctified by the custom of smoking, the chief enlarges on the causes which have called them together, and the necessity of the measures proposed on the occasion. He then invites those who are willing to follow him, to smoke out of the

sacred stem, which is considered as the token of enrolment; and if it should be the general opinion that assistance is necessary, others are invited, with great formality, to join them. Every individual who attends these meetings, brings something with him as a token of his warlike intention, or as an object of sacrifice, which, when the assembly dissolves, is suspended from poles near the place of council.

They have frequent feasts, and particular circumstances never fail to produce them, such as a tedious illness, long fasting, etc. On these occasions it is usual for the person who means to give the entertainment, to announce his design, on a certain day, of opening the medicine-bag, and smoking out of his sacred stem. This declaration is considered as a sacred vow that cannot be broken. There are also stated periods, such as the spring and autumn, when they engage in very long and solemn ceremonies. On these occasions dogs are offered as sacrifices, and those which are very fat, and milk-white, are preferred. They also make large offerings of their property, whatever it may be. The scene of these ceremonies is in an open inclosure on the bank of a river or lake, and in the most conspicuous situation, in order that such as are passing along or travelling, may be induced to make their offerings. There is

also a particular custom among them, that, on these occasions, if any of the tribe, or even a stranger, should be passing by, and be in real want of any thing that is displayed as an offering, he has a right to take it, so that he replaces it with some article he can spare, though it be of far inferior value; but to take or touch any thing wantonly is considered as a sacrilegious act, and highly insulting to the great Master of Life, to use their own expression, who is the sacred object of their devotion.

The scene of private sacrifice is the lodge of the person who performs it, which is prepared for that purpose, by removing every thing out of it, and spreading green branches in every part. The fire and ashes are also taken away. A new hearth is made of fresh earth, and another fire is lighted. The owner of the dwelling remains alone in it; and he begins the ceremony by spreading a piece of new cloth, or a well-dressed moose-skin neatly painted, on which he opens his medicine-bag and exposes its contents, consisting of various articles. The principal of them is a kind of household god, which is a small carved image about eight inches long. Its first covering is of down, over which a piece of birch-bark is closely tied, and the whole is enveloped in several folds of red and blue cloth. This little figure is an object of the

most pious regard. The next article is his war-cap, which is decorated with the feathers and plumes of scarce birds, beavers, and eagle's claws, etc. There is also suspended from it a quill or feather for every enemy whom the owner of it has slain in battle. The remaining contents of the bag are, a piece of Brazil tobacco, several roots and simples, which are in great estimation for their medicinal qualities, and a pipe. These articles being all exposed, and the stem resting upon two forks, as it must not touch the ground, the master of the lodge sends for the person he most esteems, who sits down opposite to him; the pipe is then filled and fixed to the stem. A pair of wooden pincers is provided to put the fire in the pipe, and a double-pointed pin, to empty it of the remnant of tobacco which is not consumed. This arrangement being made, the men assemble, and sometimes the women are allowed to be humble spectators, while the most religous awe and solemnity pervades the whole. The Michiniwais, or Assistant, takes up the pipe, lights it, and presents it to the officiating person, who receives it standing and holds it between both his hands. He then turns himself to the East, and draws a few whiffs, which he blows to that point. The same ceremony he observes to the other three quarters, with his eyes directed upwards during the

whole of it. He holds the stem about the middle between the three first fingers of both hands, and raising them upon a line with his forehead, he swings it three times round from the East, with the sun, when, after pointing and balancing it in various directions, he reposes it on the forks: he then makes a speech to explain the design of their being called together, which concludes with an acknowledgment for past mercies, and a prayer for the continuance of them, from the Master of Life. He then sits down, and the whole company declare their approbation and thanks by uttering the word *ho!* with an emphatic prolongation of the last letter. The Michiniwais then takes up the pipe and holds it to the mouth of the officiating person, who, after smoking three whiffs out of it, utters a short prayer, and then goes round with it, taking his course from East to West, to every person present, who individually says something to him on the occasion; and thus the pipe is generally smoked out; when, after turning it three or four times round his head, he drops it downwards, and replaces it in its original situation. He then returns the company thanks for their attendance, and wishes them, as well as the whole tribe, health and long life.

These smoking rites precede every matter of great importance, with more or less cere-

mony, but always with equal solemnity. The utility of them will appear from the following relation.

If a chief is anxious to know the disposition of his people towards him, or if he wishes to settle any difference between them, he announces his intention of opening his medicine-bag and smoking in his sacred stem; and no man who entertains a grudge against any of the party thus assembled can smoke with the sacred stem; as that ceremony dissipates all differences, and is never violated.

No one can avoid attending on these occasions; but a person may attend and be excused from assisting at the ceremonies, by acknowledging that he has not undergone the necessary purification. The having cohabited with his wife, or any other woman, within twenty-four hours preceding the ceremony, renders him unclean, and, consequently, disqualifies him from performing any part of it. If a contract is entered into and solemnised by the ceremony of smoking, it never fails of being faithfully fulfilled. If a person, previous to his going a journey, leaves the sacred stem as a pledge of his return, no consideration whatever will prevent him from executing his engagement.*

* It is, however, to be lamented, that of late there is a relaxation of the duties originally attached to these festivals.

The chief, when he proposes to make a feast, sends quills, or small pieces of wood, as tokens of invitation to such as he wishes to partake of it. At the appointed time the guests arrive, each bringing a dish or platter, and a knife, and take their seats on each side of the chief, who receives them sitting, according to their respective ages. The pipe is then lighted, and he makes an equal division of every thing that is provided. While the company are enjoying their meal, the chief sings, and accompanies his song with the tambourine, or shishiquoi, or rattle. The guest who has first eaten his portion is considered as the most distinguished person. If there should be any who cannot finish the whole of their mess, they endeavour to prevail on some of their friends to eat it for them, who are rewarded for their assistance with ammunition and tobacco. It is proper also to remark, that at these feasts a small quantity of meat or drink is sacrificed, before they begin to eat, by throwing it into the fire, or on the earth.

These feasts differ according to circumstances; sometimes each man's allowance is no more than he can despatch in a couple of hours. At other times the quantity is sufficient to supply each of them with food for a week, though it must be devoured in a day. On these occasions it is very difficult to pro-

cure substitutes, and the whole must be eaten whatever time it may require. At some of these entertainments there is a more rational arrangement, when the guests are allowed to carry home with them the superfluous part of their portions. Great care is always taken that the bones may be burned, as it would be considered a profanation were the dogs permitted to touch them.

The public feasts are conducted in the same manner, but with some additional ceremony. Several chiefs officiate at them, and procure the necessary provisions, as well as prepare a proper place of reception for the numerous company. Here the guests discourse upon public topics, repeat the heroic deeds of their forefathers, and excite the rising generation to follow their example. The entertainments on these occasions consist of dried meats, as it would not be practicable to dress a sufficient quantity of fresh meat for such a large assembly; though the women and children are excluded.

Similar feasts used to be made at funerals, and annually, in honour of the dead; but they have been, for some time, growing into disuse, and I never had an opportunity of being present at any of them.

The women, who are forbidden to enter the places sacred to these festivals, dance and sing around them, and sometimes beat time

to the music within them; which forms an agreeable contrast.

With respect to their divisions of time, they compute the length of their journeys by the number of nights passed in performing them; and they divide the year by the succession of moons. In this calculation, however, they are not altogether correct, as they cannot account for the odd days.

The names which they give to the names are descriptive of the several seasons.

May	Atheiky o Pishim	Frog Moon.
June	Oppinu o Pishim	The Moon in which birds begin to lay their eggs.
July	Aupascen o Pishim	The Moon when birds cast their feathers.
August	Aupahou o Pishim	The Moon when the young birds begin to fly.
September	Waskiscon o Pishim	The Moon when the moose deer cast their horns.
October	Wisac o Pishim	The Rutting-Moon.
November	Thithigon Pewai o Pishim	Hoar-Frost Moon.
	Kuskatinayoui o Pishim	Ice-Moon.
December	Pawatchicananasis o Pishim	Whirlwind-Moon.
January	Kushapawasticanum o Pishim	Extreme cold Moon.

February	Kichi Pishim	Big Moon; some say, Old Moon.
March	Mickysue Pishim	Eagle Moon.
April	Niscaw o Pishim	Goose Moon.

These people know the medicinal virtues of many herbs and simples, and apply the roots of plants and the bark of trees with success. But the conjurers, who monopolise the medical science, find it necessary to blend mystery with their art, and do not communicate their knowledge. Their materia medica they administer in the form of purges and clysters, but the remedies and surgical operations are supposed to derive much of their effect from magic and incantation. When a blister rises in the foot from the frost, the chafing of the shoe, etc., they immediately open it, and apply the heated blade of a knife to the part, which, painful as it may be, is found to be efficacious. A sharp flint serves them as a lancet for letting blood, as well as for scarification in bruises and swellings. For sprains, the dung of an animal just killed is considered as the best remedy. They are very fond of European medicines, though they are ignorant of their application: and those articles form an inconsiderable part of the European traffic with them.

Among their various superstitions, they believe that the vapour which is seen to hover over moist and swampy places, is the spirit

of some person lately dead. They also fancy another spirit which appears, in the shape of a man, upon the trees near the lodge of a person deceased, whose property has not been interred with them. He is represented as bearing a gun in his hand, and it is believed that he does not return to his rest, till the property that has been withheld from the grave has been sacrificed to it.

EXAMPLES OF THE KNISTENEAUX AND ALGONQUIN TONGUES.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Good Spirit	Ki jai Manitou	Ki jai Manitou.
Evil Spirit	Matchi manitou	Matchi manitou.
Man	Ethini	Inini
Woman	Esquois	Ich-quois.
Male	Nap hew	Aquoisi.
Female	Non-gense	Non-gense.
Infant	A' wash ish	Abi nont-chen.
Head	Us ti quoin	O'chiti-goine.
Forehead	Es caatick	O catick.
Hair	Wes ty-ky	Winessis.
Eyes	Es kis och	Oskingick.
Nose	Oskiwin	O'chengewane.
Nostrils	Oo tith ee go mow	Ni-de-ni-guom.
Mouth	O toune	O tonne.
My teeth	Wip pit tah	Nibit.
Tongue	Otaithani	O-tai-na-ni.
Beard	Michitoune	Omichitonn.
Brain	With i tip	Aba-e winikan.
Ears	O tow ee gie	O-ta wagane.
Neck	O qui ow	O'quoi gan.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Throat	O koot tas gy	Nigon dagane.
Arms	O nisk	O nic.
Fingers	Che chee	Ni nid gines.
Nails	Wos kos sia	Os-kenge.
Side	O's spig gy	Opikegan.
My back	No pis quan	Ni-pi quoini.
My belly	Nattay	Ni my sat.
Thighs	O povam	Obouame.
My knees	No che quoin noh	Ni gui tick.
Legs	Nos	Ni gatte.
Heart	Ok thea	Othai.
My father	Noo ta wie	Nossai.
My mother	Nigah wei	Nigah.
My boy (son)	Negousis	Nigouisses.
My girl (daughter)	Netanis	Nidaniss.
My brother, elder	Ni stess	Nis-a-yen.
My sister, elder	Ne miss	Nimisain.
My grandfather	Ne moo shum	Ni-mi-chomiss.
My grandmother	N'o kum	No-co-miss.
My uncle	N' o'ka miss	Ni ni michomen.
My nephew	Ne too sim	Ne do jim.
My niece	Ne too sim esquois	Ni-do-jim equois
My mother-in-law	Nisigouse	Ni sigousiss.
My brother-in-law	Nistah	Nitah.
My companion	Ne wechi wagan	Ni-wit-chi-wagan.
My husband	Ni nap pem	Ni na bem.
Blood	Mith coo	Misquoi.
Old Man	Shi nap	Aki win se.
I am angry	Ne kis si wash en	Nis Katissiwine.
I fear	Ne goos tow	Nisest guse.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Joy	Ne hea tha tom	Mamond gikisi.
Hearing	Pethom	Oda wagan.
Track	Mis conna	Pemi ka wois.
Chief, great ruler	Haukimah	Kitchi onodis.
Thief	Kismouthesk	Ke moutiske.
Excrement	Meyee	Moui.
Buffalo	Moustouche	Pichike.
Ferret	Sigous	Shingouss.
Polecat	Shicak	Shi kak.
Elk	Moustouche	Michai woi.
Rein deer	Attick	Atick.
Fallow deer	Attick	Wa wasquesh.
Beaver	Amisk	Amic.
Wolverine	Qui qua katch	Quin quoagki.
Squirrel	Ennequachas	Otchi ta mou.
Minx	Sa quasue	Shaugouch.
Otter	Nekick	Ni guick.
Wolf	Mayegan	Maygan.
Hare	Wapouce	Wapouce.
Marten	Wappistan	Wabichinse.
Moose	Mouswah	Monse.
Bear	Masqua	Macqua.
Fisher	Wijask	Od-jisck.
Lynx	Picheu	Pechou.
Porcupine	Cau quah	Kack.
Fox	Mikasew	Wagouche.
Musk Rat	Wajask	Wa-jack.
Mouse	Abicushiss	Wai wa be gou noge.
Cow Buffalo	Noshi Mous-touche	Nochena pichik.
Meat-flesh	Wias	Wi-ass.
Dog	Atim	Ani-mouse.
Eagle	Makusue	Me-guissis.
Duck	Sy Sip	Shi-sip.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Crow, Corbeau	Ca Cawkeu	Ka Kak.
Swan	Wapiseu	Wa-pe-sy.
Turkey	Mes sei thew	Mississay.
Pheasants	Okes kew	Ajack.
Bird	Pethesew	Pi-na-sy.
Outard	Niscag	Nic kack.
White Goose	Wey Wois	Woi wois.
Grey Goose	Pestasish	Pos ta kisk.
Partridge	Pithew	Pen ainse.
Water Hen	Chiquibish	Che qui bis.
Dove	Omi Mee	O mi-mis.
Eggs	Wa Wah	Wa Weni.
Pike or Jack	Kenonge	Kenonge.
Carp	Na may bin	Na me bine.
Sturgeon	Na May	Na Maiu.
White fish	Aticaming	Aticaming.
Pickerel	Oc-chaw	Oh-ga.
Fish (in general)	Kenonge	Ki-cons.
Spawn	Waquon	Wa quock.
Fins	Chi chi kan	O nidj-igan.
Trout	Nay gouse	Na Men Gouse.
Craw Fish	A shag gee	A cha kens chacque.
Frog	Athick	O ma ka ki.
Wasp	Ah moo	A mon.
Turtle	Mikinack	Mi-ki-nack.
Snake	Kinibick	Ki nai bick.
Awl	Oscajick	Ma-gose.
Needle	Saboinigan	Sha-bo nigan.
Fire steel	Appet	Scoutecgan.
Fire wood	Mich-tah	Missane.
Cradle	Teckinigan	Tickina-gan.
Dagger	Ta Comagau	Na-ba-ke-gouman.
Arrow	Augusk or Atouche	Mettic kanouins.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Fish Hook	Quosquipichican	Maneton Miquiscan.
Ax	Shegaygan	Wagagvette.
Ear-bob	Chi-kisebisoun	Na be chi be soun.
Comb	Sicahoun	Pin ack wan.
Net	Athabe	Assap.
Tree	Mistick	Miti-coum.
Wood	Mistick	Mitic.
Paddle	Aboi	Aboui.
Canoe	Chiman	S-chiman.
Birch Rind	Wasquoi	Wig nass.
Bark	Wasquoi	On-na-guege.
Touch Wood	Pousagan	Sa-ga-tagan.
Leaf	Nepeshah	Ni-biche.
Grass	Masquosi	Masquosi.
Raspberries	Misqui-meinac	Misqui meinac.
Strawberries	O'-tai-e minac	O'-tai-e minac.
Ashes	Pecouch	Pengoui.
Fire	Scou tay	Scou tay.
Grapes	Shomenac	Shomenac.
Fog	Pakishihow	A Winni.
Mud	Asus ki	A Shiski.
Currant	Kisijiwin	Ki si chi woin.
Road	Mescanah	Mickanan.
Winter	Pipoun	Pipone.
Island	Ministick	Miniss.
Lake	Sagayigan	Sagayigan.
Sun	Pisim	Kijis.
Moon	Tibisca pesim (the night Sun)	Dibic Kiji
Day	Kigigah	Kigi gatte.
Night	Tabisca	Dibic kawte.
Snow	Counah	So qui po.
Rain	Kimiwoin	Ki mi woini
Drift	Pewan	Pi-woine.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Hail	Shes eagan	Me qua mensan.
Ice	Mesquaming	Me quam.
Frost	Aquatin	Gas-ga-tin.
Mist	Picasyow	An-quo-et.
Water	Nepec	Nipei.
World	Messeasky (all the earth)	Missi achki.
Mountain	Wachee	Watchive.
Sea	Kitchi kitchi gaming	Kitchi kitchi gaming.
Morning	Kequishepe	Ki-ki-jep.
Mid-day	Abetah quisheik	Na ock quoi.
Portage	Unygam	Ouni-gam.
Spring	Menouscaming	Mino ka ming.
River	Sipee	Sipi.
Rapid	Bawastick	Ba wetick.
Rivulet	Sepeesis	Sipi wes chin.
Sand	Thocaw	Ne gawe.
Earth	Askee	Ach ki.
Star	Attack	Anang.
Thunder	Pithuseu	Ni mi ki.
Wind	Thoutin	No tine.
Calm	Athawostin	A-no-a-tine.
Heat	Quishipoi	Aboyce.
Evening	Ta kashike	O'n-a-guche.
North	Kywoitin	Ke woitinak.
South	Sawena woon	Sha-wa-na-wang.
East	Coshawcastak	Wa-ba-no-no-tine.
West	Paquisimow	Panguis-chi-mo.
To-morrow	Wabank	Wa-bang.
Bone	Oskann	Oc-kann.
Broth	Michim waboi	Thaboub.
Feast	Ma qua see	Wi con qui wine.
Grease or oil	Pimis	Pimi-tais.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Marrow fat	Oscan pimis	Oska-pimitais.
Sinew	Asstis	Attiss.
Lodge	Wig-waum	Wi-gui-wam.
Bed	Ne pa win	Ne pai wine.
Within	Pendog ke	Pendig.
Door	Squandam	Scouandam.
Dish	Othagan	O' na gann.
Fort	Wasgaigan	Wa-kuigan.
Sledge	Tabanask	Otabanac.
Cincture	Poquoatehoun	Ketche pisou.
Cap	Astotin	Pe matinang.
Socks	Ashican	A chi-gan.
Shirt	Papackeweyan	Pa pa ki weyan.
Coat	Papise-co-wa-gan	Papise-co-wa-gan.
Blanket	Wape weyang	Wape weyan.
Cloth	Maneto weguin	Maneto weguin.
Thread	Assabab	Assabab.
Garters	Chi ki-bisoon	Fi gaske-tase be-soun.
Mittens	Astissack	Medjica wine.
Shoes	Maskisin	Makisin.
Smoking bag	Kusquepetagan	Kasquepetagan.
Portage sling	Apisan	Apican.
Strait on	Goi ask	Goi-ack.
Medicine	Mas ki kee	Macki-ki.
Red	Mes coh	Mes-cowa.
Blue	Kasqutch (same as black)	O-jawes-cowa.
White	Wabisca	Wabisca.
Yellow	Saw waw	O-jawa.
Green	Chibatiquare	O'jawes-cowa.
Brown		O'jawes-cowa.
Grey, etc.		O'jawes-cowa.
Ugly	Mache na gou-seu	Mous-counu-gouse.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Handsome	Catawassiseu	Nam bissa.
Beautiful	Kissi Sawenogan	Quoi Natch.
Deaf	Nima petom	Ka ki be chai.
Good-natured	Mithiwashin	Onichishin.
Pregnant	Paawie	And-jioko.
Fat	Outhineu	Oui-ni-noe.
Big	Mushikitee	Messha.
Small or little	Abisasheu	Agu-chin.
Short	Chemasish	Tackosi.
Skin	Wian	Wian.
Long	Kinwain	Kiniwa.
Strong	Mascawa	{ Mache-cawa. Mas-cawise.
Coward	Sagatahaw	Cha-goutai-ye.
Weak	Nitha missew	Cha-gousi.
Lean	Mahta waw	Ka wa ca tosa.
Brave	Nima Gustaw	Son qui taige.
Young man	Osquineguish	Oskinigui.
Cold	Kissin	Kissinan.
Hot	Kichatai	Kicha tai.
Spring	Minouscaming	Minokaming.
Summer	Nibin	Nibiqui.
Fall	Tagowagonk	Tagowag.
One	Peyac	Pecheik.
Two	Nisheu	Nige.
Three	Nishtou	Nis-wois.
Four	Neway	Ne-au.
Five	Ni-annan	Na-nan.
Six	Negoutawoesic	Ni gouta was-wois.
Seven	Nish woisic	Nigi-was-wois.
Eight	Jannanew	She was wois.
Nine	Shack	Shann was wois.
Ten	Mitatat	Mit-asswois.
Eleven	Peyac osap	Mitasswois, hachi pecheik.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Twelve	Nisheu osap	Mitasswois, hachi, nige.
Thirteen	Nichtou osap	Mitasswois, hachi, niswois.
Fourteen	Neway osap	Mitasswois, hachi, ne-au.
Fifteen	Niannan osap	Mitasswois, hachi, nanan.
Sixteen	Nigoutawoesic osap	Mitasswois, hachi, negoutawaswois.
Seventeen	Nish woesic osap	Mitasswois, hachi, nigi was-wois.
Eighteen	Jannanew osap	Mitasswois, hachi, shiwasswois.
Nineteen	Shack osap	Mitasswois, hachi, shang as wois.
Twenty	Nisheu mitenah	Nigeta-nan.
Twenty-one	Nishew mitenah peyac osap	Nigeta nan, hachi, pechic.
Twenty-two, etc.	Nisheu mitenah nishew osap	
Thirty	Nishtou mitenah	Niswois mitanan.
Forty	Neway mitenah	Neau mitanan.
Fifty	Niannan mitenah	Nanan mitanan.
Sixty	Negoutawoisic mitenah	Nigouta was wois mitanan.
Seventy	Nishwoisic mitenah	Nigi was wois mitanan.
Eighty	Jannaeu mitenah	She was wos mitanan.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Ninety	Shack mitenah	Shang was wois mitanan.
Hundred	Mitana mitenan	Ningoutwack.
Two hundred	Neshew mitena a mitenah	Nige wack.
One thousand	Mitenah mitena mitenah	Kitchi-wack.
First	Nican	Nitam.
Last	Squayatch	Shaquoiyanke.
More	Minah	Awa-chi min.
Better	Athiwack mitha-washin	A wachimin o nichi shen.
Best	Atniwack mitha-washin	Kitchi o nichi shin.
I, or me	Nitha	Nin.
You, or thou	Kitha	Kin.
They, or them	Withawaw	Win na wa.
We	Nithawaw	Nina wa.
My, or mine	Nitayan	Nida yam.
Your's	Kitayan	Kitayam.
Who		Auoni.
Whom	Awoine	Kegoi nin.
What		Wa.
His, or her's	Otayan	Otayim mis.
All	Kakithau	Kakenan.
Some, or some few	Pey peyac	Pe-pichic.
The same	Tabescoutch	Mi ta yoche.
All the world	Missi acki wan-que	Mishiwai asky.
All the men	Kakithaw Ethi nyock	Missi Inini wock.
More	Mina	Mina wa.
Now and then		Nannigouten-gue.
Sometimes	I as-cow-puco	

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
Seldom		Wica-ac-ko.
Arrive	Ta couchin	Ta-gouchin.
Beat	Otamaha	Packit-ais.
To burn	Mistascasoo	Icha-quiso.
To sing	Nagamoun	Nagam.
To cut	Kisquishan	Qui qui jan.
To hide	Catann	Caso tawe.
To cover	Acquahoun	A co na oune.
To believe	Taboitam	Tai boitam.
To sleep	Nepan	Ni pann.
To dispute	Ke ko mitowock	Ki quaidiwine.
To dance	Nemaytow	Nimic.
To give	Mith	Mih.
To do	Ogitann	O-gitoune.
To eat	Wissinee	Wissiniwin.
To die	Nepew	Ni po wen.
To forget	Winnekiskisew	Woi ni mi kaw.
To speak	Athimetakcouse	Aninntagousse.
To cry (tears)	Mantow	Ma wi.
To laugh	Papew	Pa-pe
To set down	Nematappe	Na matape win.
To walk	Pimoutais	Pemoussai.
To fall	Packisin	Panguishin.
To work	Ah tus kew	Anokeh.
To kill	Nipahaw	Nishi-woes.
To sell	Attawoin	Ata wois.
To live	Pimatise	Pematis.
To see	Wabam	Wab.
To come	Astamoteh	Pitta-si-mouss.
Enough	Egothigog	Mi mi nic.
Cry (tears)	Manteau	Ambai ma wita.
It hails	Shisiagan	Sai saigaun.
There is / There is some	Aya wa	Aya wan.
It rains	Quimiwoin	Qui mi woin.
After to-morrow	Awis wabank	Awes wabang.

	Knisteneaux.	Algonquin.
To-day	Anoutch	Non gum.
Thereaway	Netoi	Awoite.
Much	Michett	Ni bi wa.
Presently	Pichisqua	Pitchinac.
Make, heart	Quithipeh	Wai we be.
This morning	Shebas	Shai bas.
This night	Tibiscag	De bi cong.
Above	Espiming	O kitchiai.
Below	Tabassish	Ana mai.
Truly	Taboiy	Ne de wache.
Already	Sashay	Sha shaye.
Yet more	Minah	Mina wa.
Yesterday	Tacoushick	Pitchinago.
Far	Wathow	Wassa.
Near	Quishiwoac	Paishou.
Never	Nima wecatch	Ka wi ka.
No	Nima	Ka wine.
Yes	Ah	In.
By-and-bye	Pa-nima	Pa-nima.
Always	Ka-ki-kee	Ka qui nick
Make haste	Quethepeh	Niguim.
It's long since	Mewaisha	Mon wisha.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CHEPEWYAN INDIANS.

They are a numerous people, who consider the country between the parallels of latitude 60. and 65. North, and longitude 100. to 110. West, as their lands or home. They speak a copious language, which is very difficult to be attained, and furnishes dialects to the various emigrant tribes which inhabit the following immense track of country, whose boundary I shall describe.* It begins at Churchill, and runs along the line of separation between them and the Knisteneaux, up the Missinipi to the Isle a la Crosse, passing on through the Buffalo Lake, River Lake, and Portage la Loche: from thence it proceeds by the Elk River to the Lake of the Hills, and goes directly West to the Peach River; and up that river to its source and tributary waters; from whence it proceeds to the waters of the river Columbia; and follows that river to latitude 52. 24. North, and longitude 22. 54. West, where the Chepe-

* Those of them who come to trade with us, do not exceed eight hundred men, and have a smattering of the Knisteneau tongue, in which they carry on their dealings with us.

wyans have the Atnah or Chin Nation for their neighbours. It then takes a line due West to the seacoast, within which, the country is possessed by a people who speak their language * and are consequently descended from them: there can be no doubt, therefore, of their progress being to the Eastward. A tribe of them is even known at the upper establishments on the Saskatchiwine; and I do not pretend to ascertain how far they may follow the Rocky Mountains to the East.

It is not possible to form any just estimate of their numbers, but it is apparent, nevertheless, that they are by no means proportionate to the vast extent of their territories, which may, in some degree, be attributed to the ravages of the small-pox, which are, more or less, evident throughout this part of the continent.

The notion which these people entertain of the creation, is of a very singular nature. They believe that, at the first, the globe was one vast and entire ocean, inhabited by no living creature, except a mighty bird, whose eyes were fire, whose glances were lightning, and the clapping of whose wings were thunder. On his descent to the ocean, and touching it, the earth instantly arose, and re-

* The coast is inhabited on the North-West by the Eskimaux, and on the Pacific Ocean by a people different from both.

mained on the surface of the waters. This omnipotent bird then called forth all the variety of animals from the earth, except the Chepewyans, who were produced from a dog; and this circumstance occasions their aversion to the flesh of that animal, as well as the people who eat it. This extraordinary tradition proceeds to relate, that the great bird, having finished his work, made an arrow, which was to be preserved with great care, and to remain untouched; but that the Chepewyans were so devoid of understanding, as to carry it away; and the sacrilege so enraged the great bird, that he has never since appeared.

They have also a tradition amongst them, that they originally came from another country, inhabited by very wicked people, and had traversed a great lake, which was narrow, shallow, and full of islands, where they had suffered great misery, it being always winter, with ice and deep snow. At the Copper-Mine River, where they made the first land, the ground was covered with copper, over which a body of earth had since been collected, to the depth of a man's height. They believe, also, that in ancient times their ancestors lived till their feet were worn out with walking, and their throats with eating. They describe a deluge, when the waters spread over the whole earth, except the high-

est mountains, on the tops of which they preserved themselves.

They believe, that immediately after their death, they pass into another world, where they arrive at a large river, on which they embark in a stone canoe, and that a gentle current bears them on to an extensive lake, in the centre of which is a most beautiful island; and that, in the view of this delightful abode, they receive that judgment for their conduct during life, which terminates their final state and unalterable allotment. If their good actions are declared to predominate, they are landed upon the island, where there is to be no end to their happiness; which, however, according to their notions, consists in an eternal enjoyment of sensual pleasure, and carnal gratification. But if their bad actions weigh down the balance, the stone canoe sinks at once, and leaves them up to their chins in the water, to behold and regret the reward enjoyed by the good, and eternally struggling, but with unavailing endeavours, to reach the blissful island, from which they are excluded for ever.

They have some faint notions of the transmigration of the soul; so that if a child be born with teeth, they instantly imagine, from its premature appearance, that it bears a resemblance to some person who had lived to an advanced period, and that he has assumed

a renovated life, with these extraordinary tokens of maturity.

The Chepewyans are sober, timorous, and vagrant, with a selfish disposition that has sometimes created suspicions of their integrity. Their stature has nothing remarkable in it; but though they are seldom corpulent, they are sometimes robust. Their complexion is swarthy; their features coarse, and their hair lank, but always of a dingy black; nor have they universally the piercing eye, which generally animates the Indian countenance. The women have a more agreeable aspect than the men, but their gait is awkward, which proceeds from their being accustomed, nine months in the year, to travel on snow-shoes and drag sledges of a weight from two to four hundred pounds. They are very submissive to their husbands, who have, however, their fits of jealousy; and, for very trifling causes, treat them with such cruelty as sometimes to occasion their death. They are frequently objects of traffic; and the father possesses the right of disposing of his daughter.* The men in general extract their beards, though some of them are seen to prefer a bushy black beard, to a smooth chin. They cut their hair in various forms, or leave it in a long, natural

* They do not, however, sell them as slaves, but as companions to those who are supposed to live more comfortably than themselves.

flow, according as their caprice or fancy suggests. The women always wear it in great length, and some of them are very attentive to its arrangement. If they at any time appear despoiled of their tresses, it is to be esteemed a proof of the husband's jealousy, and is considered as a severer punishment than manual correction. Both sexes have blue or black bars, or from one to four straight lines on their cheeks or forehead, to distinguish the tribe to which they belong. These marks are either tattooed, or made by drawing a thread, dipped in the necessary colour, beneath the skin.

There are no people more attentive to the comforts of their dress, or less anxious respecting its exterior appearance. In the winter it is composed of the skins of deer, and their fawns, and dressed as fine as any chamois leather, in the hair. In the summer their apparel is the same, except that it is prepared without the hair. Their shoes and leggins are sewed together, the latter reaching upwards to the middle, and being supported by a belt, under which a small piece of leather is drawn to cover the private parts, the ends of which fall down both before and behind. In the shoes they put the hair of the moose or reindeer with additional pieces of leather as socks. The shirt or coat, when girted round the waist, reaches to the middle

of the thigh, and the mittens are sewed to the sleeves, or are suspended by strings from the shoulders. A ruff or tippet surrounds the neck, and the skin of the head of the deer forms a curious kind of cap. A robe, made of several deer or fawn skins sewed together, covers the whole. This dress is worn single or double, but always in the winter, with the hair within and without. Thus arrayed a Chepewyan will lay himself down on the ice in the middle of a lake, and repose in comfort; though he will sometimes find a difficulty in the morning to disencumber himself from the snow drifted on him during the night. If in his passage he should be in want of provision, he cuts a hole in the ice, when he seldom fails of taking some trout or pike, whose eyes he instantly scoops out, and eats as a great delicacy; but if they should not be sufficient to satisfy his appetite, he will, in this necessity make his meal of the fish in its raw state; but, those whom I saw, preferred to dress their victuals when circumstances admitted the necessary preparation. When they are in that part of their country which does not produce a sufficient quantity of wood for fuel, they are reduced to the same exigency, though they generally dry their meat in the sun.*

*The provision called pemmican, on which the Chepewyans, as well as the other savages of this

The dress of the women differs from that of the men. Their leggins are tied below the knee; and their coat or shift is wide, hanging down to the ankle, and is tucked up at pleasure by means of a belt, which is fastened round the waist. Those who have children have these garments made very full about the shoulders, as when they are travelling they carry their infants upon their backs, next their skin, in which situation they are perfectly comfortable and in a position convenient to be suckled. Nor do they discontinue

country, chiefly subsist in their journeys, is prepared in the following manner: The lean parts of the flesh of the larger animals are cut in thin slices, and are placed on a wooden grate over a slow fire, or exposed to the sun, and sometimes to the frost. These operations dry it, and in that state it is pounded between two stones; it will then keep with care for several years. If, however, it is kept in large quantities, it is disposed to ferment in the spring of the year, when it must be exposed to the air, or it will soon decay. The inside fat, and that of the rump, which is much thicker in these wild than our domestic animals, is melted down and mixed, in a boiling state with the pounded meat, in equal proportions: it is then put in baskets or bags for the convenience of carrying it. Thus it becomes a nutritious food, and is eaten, without any further preparation, or the addition of spice, salt, or any vegetable or farinaceous substance. A little time reconciles it to the palate. There is another sort made with the addition of marrow and dried berries, which is of a superior quality.

to give their milk to them till they have another child. Childbirth is not the object of that tender care and serious attention among the savages as it is among civilised people. At this period no part of their usual occupation is omitted, and this continual and regular exercise must contribute to the welfare of the mother, both in the progress of parturition and in the moment of delivery. The women have a singular custom of cutting off a small piece of the navel string of the new-born children, and hang it about their necks: they are also curious in the covering they make for it, which they decorate with porcupine's quills and beads.

Though the women are as much in the power of the men, as other articles of their property, they are always consulted, and possess a very considerable influence in the traffic with Europeans, and other important concerns.

Plurality of wives is common among them, and the ceremony of marriage is of a very simple nature. The girls are betrothed at a very early period to those whom the parents think the best able to support them: nor is the inclination of the women considered. Whenever a separation takes place, which sometimes happens, it depends entirely on the will and pleasure of the husband. In common with the other Indians of this coun-

try, they have a custom respecting the periodical state of a woman, which is rigorously observed: at that time she must seclude herself from society. They are not even allowed in that situation to keep the same path as the men, when travelling: and it is considered a great breach of decency for a woman so circumstanced to touch any utensils of manly occupation. Such a circumstance is supposed to defile them, so that their subsequent use would be followed by certain mischief or misfortune. There are particular skins which the women never touch, as of the bear and wolf; and those animals the men are seldom known to kill.

They are not remarkable for their activity as hunters, which is owing to the ease with which they snare deer and spear fish: and these occupations are not beyond the strength of their old men, women, and boys: so that they participate in those laborious occupations, which among their neighbours are confined to the women. They make war on the Esquimaux, who cannot resist their superior numbers, and put them to death, as it is a principle with them never to make prisoners. At the same time they tamely submit to the Knisteneaux, who are not so numerous as themselves, when they treat them as enemies.

They do not affect that cold reserve at meeting, either among themselves or stran-

gers, which is common with the Knisteneaux, but communicate mutually, and at once, all the information of which they are possessed. Nor are they roused like them from an apparent torpor to a state of great activity. They are consequently more uniform in this respect, though they are of a very persevering disposition when their interest is concerned.

As these people are not addicted to spirituous liquors, they have a regular and uninterrupted use of their understanding, which is always directed to the advancement of their own interest; and this disposition, as may be readily imagined, sometimes occasions them to be charged with fraudulent habits. They will submit with patience to the severest treatment, when they are conscious that they deserve it, but will never forget or forgive any wanton or unnecessary rigour. A moderate conduct I never found to fail, nor do I hesitate to represent them, altogether, as the most peaceable tribe of Indians known in North America.

There are conjurers and high-priests, but I was not present at any of their ceremonies; though they certainly operate in an extraordinary manner on the imaginations of the people in the cure of disorders. Their principal maladies are, rheumatic pains, the flux and consumption. The venereal complaint is

very common; but though its progress is slow, it gradually undermines the constitution, and brings on premature decay. They have recourse to superstition for their cure, and charms are their only remedies, except the bark of the willow, which being burned and reduced to powder, is strewed upon green wounds and ulcers, and places contrived for promoting perspiration. Of the use of simples and plants they have no knowledge; nor can it be expected, as their country does not produce them.

Though they have enjoyed so long an intercourse with Europeans, their country is so barren, as not to be capable of producing the ordinary necessaries naturally introduced by such a communication; and they continue, in a great measure, their own inconvenient and awkward modes of taking their game and preparing it when taken. Sometimes they drive the deer into the small lakes, where they spear them, or force them into inclosures, where the bow and arrow are employed against them. These animals are also taken in snares make of skin. In the former instance the game is divided among those who have been engaged in the pursuit of it. In the latter it is considered as private property; nevertheless, any unsuccessful hunter passing by, may take a deer so caught, leaving the head, skin, and saddle for the owner.

Thus, though they have no regular government, as every man is lord in his own family, they are influenced, more or less, by certain principles which condone to their general benefit.

In their quarrels with each other, they very rarely proceed to a greater degree of violence than is occasioned by blows, wrestling, and pulling of the hair, while their abusive language consists in applying the name of the most offensive animal to the object of their displeasure, and adding the term ugly, and chiay, or still-born.*

Their arms and domestic apparatus, in addition to the articles procured from Europeans, are spears, bows, and arrows, fishing-nets, and lines made of green deer-skin thongs. They have also nets for taking the beaver as he endeavours to escape from his lodge when it is broken open. It is set in a particular manner for the purpose, and a man is employed to watch the moment when he enters the snare, or he would soon cut his way through it. He is then thrown upon the ice where he remains as if he had no life in him.

The snow-shoes are of a very superior workmanship. The inner part of their frame is straight, the outer one is curved, and it is

* This name is also applicable to the fœtus of an animal, when killed, which is considered as one of the greatest delicacies.

pointed at both ends, with that in front turned up. They are also laced with great neatness with thongs made of deer-skin. The sledges are formed of thin slips of board turned up also in front, and are highly polished with crooked knives, in order to slide along with facility. Close-grained wood is, on that acount, the best; but theirs are made of the red or swamp spruce-fir tree.

The country, which these people claim as their land, has a very small quantity of earth, and produces little or no wood or herbage. Its chief vegetable substance is the moss, on which the deer feed; and a kind of rock moss, which, in times of scarcity, preserves the lives of the natives. When boiled in water, it dissolves into a clammy, glutinous substance, that affords a very sufficient nourishment. But, notwithstanding the barren state of their country, with proper care and economy, these people might live in great comfort, for the lakes abound in fish, and the hills are covered with deer. Though, of all the Indian people of this continent they are considered as the most provident, they suffer severely at certain seasons, and particularly in the dead of winter, when they are under the necessity of retiring to their scanty, stinted woods. To the Westward of them the musk-ox may be found, but they have no dependence on it as an article of sustenance.

There are also large hares, a few white wolves, peculiar to their country, and several kinds of foxes, with white and grey partridges, etc. The beaver and moose-deer they do not find till they come within 60 degrees North latitude; and the buffalo is still further South. That animal is known to frequent an higher latitude to the Westward of their country. These people bring pieces of beautiful variegated marble, which are found on the surface of the earth. It is easily worked, bears a fine polish, and hardens with time; it endures heat, and is manufactured into pipes or calumets, as they are very fond of smoking tobacco; a luxury which the Europeans communicated to them.

Their amusements or recreations are but few. Their music is so inharmonious, and their dancing so awkward, that they might be supposed to be ashamed of both, as they very seldom practise either. They also shoot at marks, and play at the games common among them; but in fact they prefer sleeping to either; and the greater part of their time is passed in procuring food, and resting from the toil necessary to obtain it.

They are also of a querulous disposition, and are continually making complaints; which they express by a constant repetition of the word eduiy, "it is hard," in a whining and plaintive tone of voice.

They are superstitious in the extreme, and almost every action of their lives, however trivial, is more or less influenced by some whimsical notion. I never observed that they had any partcular form of religious worship; but as they believe in a good and evil spirit, and a state of future rewards and punishments, they cannot be devoid of religious impressions. At the same time they manifest a decided unwillingness to make any communications on the subject.

The Chepewyans have been accused of abandoning their aged and infirm people to perish, and of not burying their dead; but these are melancholy necessities, which proceed from their wandering way of life. They are by no means universal, for it is within my knowledge, that a man, rendered helpless by the palsy, was carried about for many years, with the greatest tenderness and attention, till he died a natural death. That they should not bury their dead in their own country, cannot be imputed to them as a custom arising from a savage insensibility, as they inhabit such high latitudes that the ground never thaws; but it is well known, that when they are in the woods, they cover their dead with trees. Besides, they manifest no common respect to the memory of their departed friends, by a long period of mourning, cutting off their hair, and never making use of

the property of the deceased. Nay, they frequently destroy or sacrifice their own, as a token of regret and sorrow.

If there be any people who, from the barren state of their country, might be supposed to be cannibals by nature, these people, from the difficulty they, at times, experience in procuring food, might be liable to that imputation. But, in all my knowledge of them, I never was acquainted with one instance of that disposition; nor among all the natives which I met with in a route of five thousand miles, did I see or hear of an example of cannibalism, but such as arose from that irresistible necessity, which has been known to impel even the most civilised people to eat each other.

EXAMPLE OF THE CHEPEWYAN TONGUE.

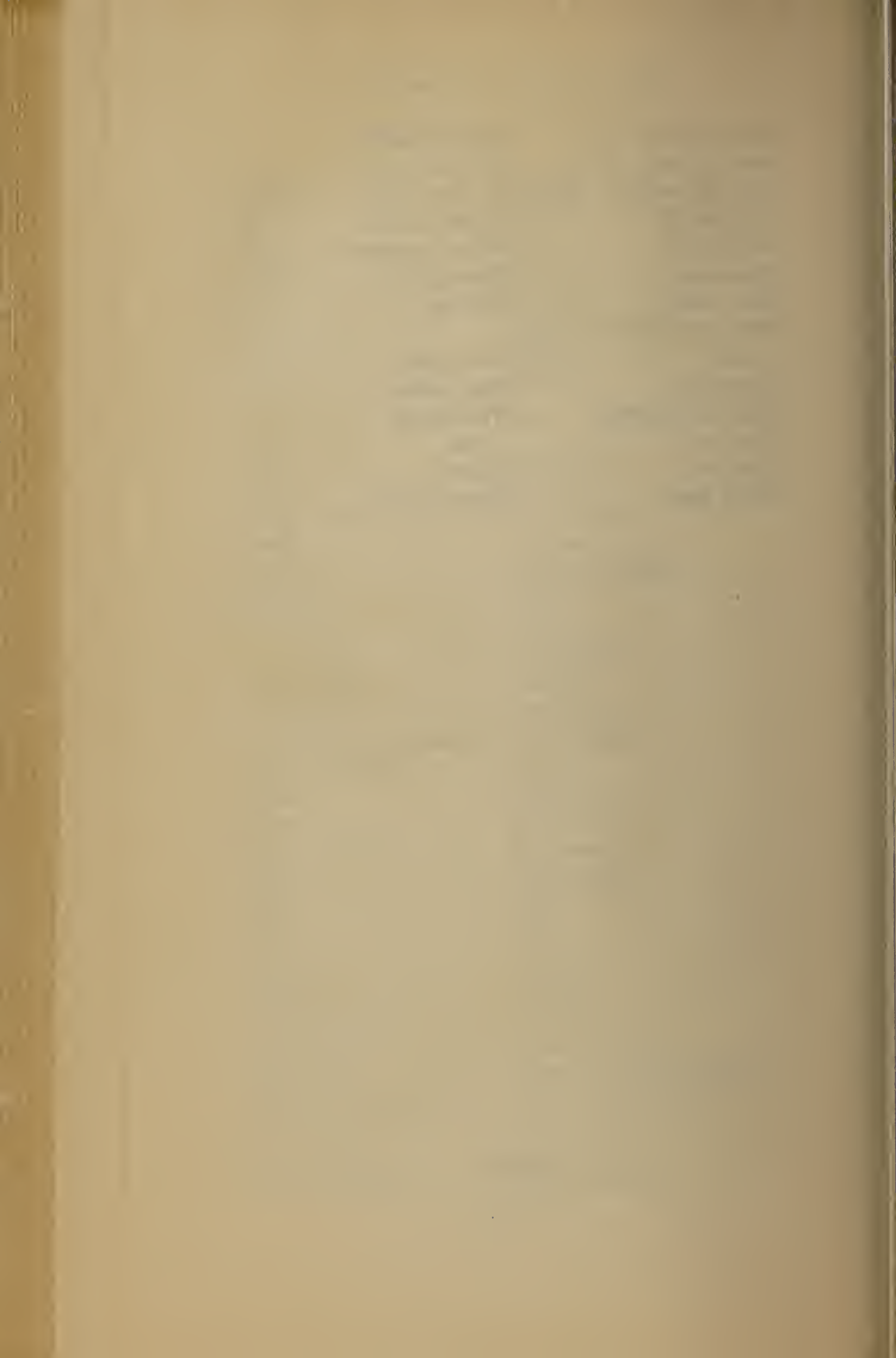
Man	Dinnie.
Woman	Chequois.
Young man	Quelaquis.
Young woman	Quelaquis chequoi.
My son	Zi azay.
My daughter	Zi lengai.
My husband	Zi dinnie.
My wife	Zi zayunai.
My brother	Zi raing.
My father	Zi tah.
My mother	Zi nah.
My grandfather	Zi unai.
Me, or my	See.

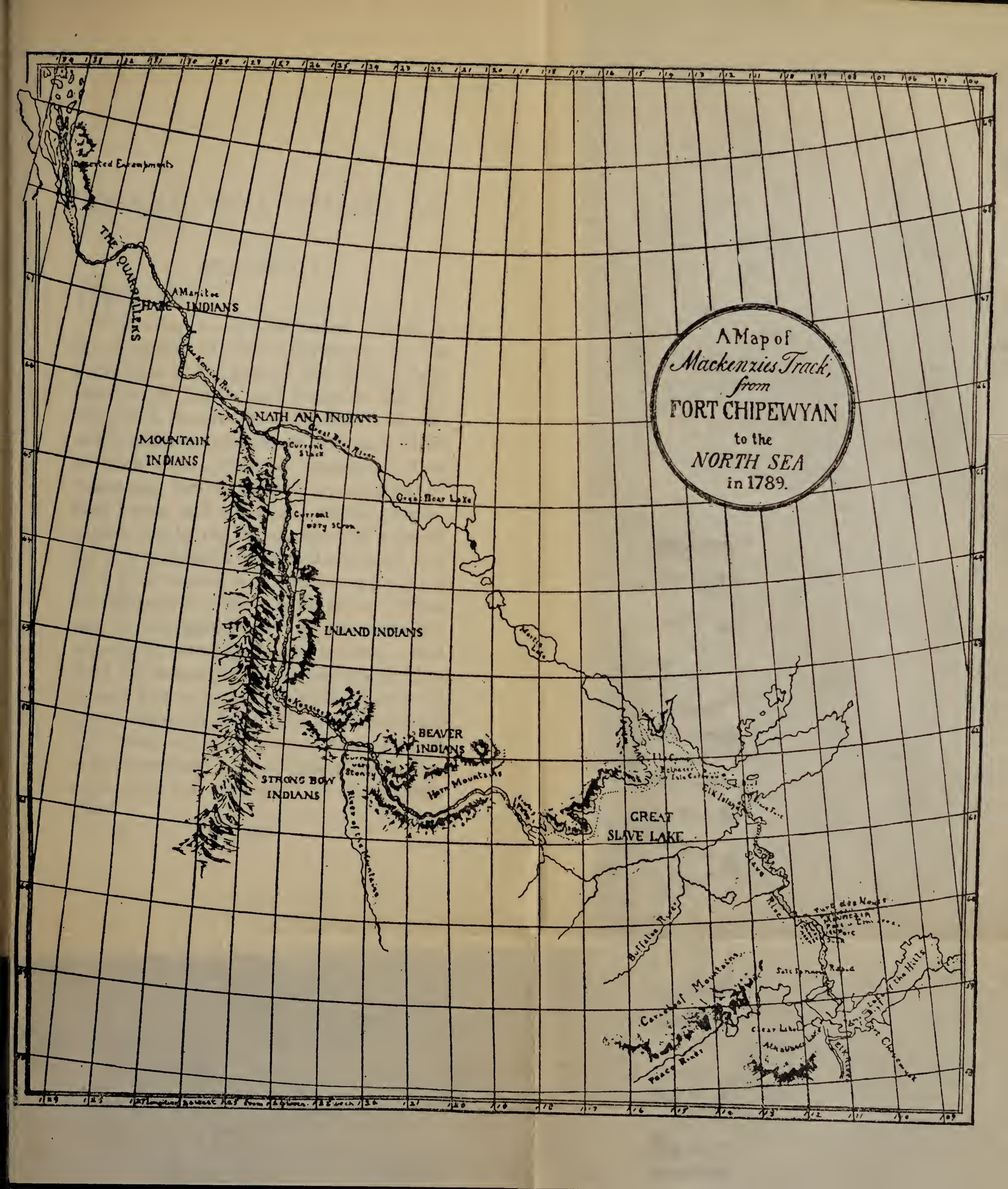
I	Ne.
You	Nun.
They	Be.
Head	Edthie.
Hand	Law.
Leg	Edthen.
Foot	Cuh.
Eyes	Nackhay.
Teeth	Goo.
Side	Kac-hey.
Belly	Bitt.
Tongue	Edthu.
Hair	Thiegah.
Back	Losseh.
Blood	Dell.
The Knee	Cha-gutt.
Clothes or Blanket	Etlunay.
Coat	Eeh.
Leggin	Thell.
Shoes	Kinchee.
Robe or Blanket	Thuth.
Sleeves	Bah.
Mittens	Geese.
Cap	Sah.
Swan	Kagouce.
Duck	Keth.
Goose	Gah.
White partridge	Cass bah.
Grey partridge	Deyee.
Buffalo	Giddy.
Moose deer	Dinyai.
Rein deer	Edthun.
Beaver	Zah.
Bear	Zass.
Otter	Gaby-ai.
Martin	Thah.
Wolverine	Naguiyai.

Wolf	Yess (Nouhoay).
Fox	Naguethey.
Hare	Cah.
Dog	Sliengh.
Beaver-skin	Zah thah.
Otter-skin	Naby-ai thith.
Moose-skin	Deny-ai thith.
Fat	Icah.
Grease	Thless.
Meat	Bid.
Pike	Uldiah.
White-fish	Slouev.
Trout	Slouey zinai.
Pickerel	G'Gah.
Fish-hook	Ge-eth.
Fish-line	Clulez.
One	Slachy.
Two	Naghur.
Three	Tagh-y.
Four	Dengk-y.
Five	Sasoulachee.
Six	Alki tar-hy-y.
Seven	
Eight	Alki deing-hy.
Nine	Cakina hanoth-na.
Ten	Ca noth na.
Twenty	Na ghur cha noth na.
Fire	Counn.
Water	Toue.
Wood	Dethkin.
Ice	Thun.
Snow	Yath.
Rain	Thinnelsee.
Lake	Touey.
River	Tesse.
Mountain	Zeth.
Stone	Thaih.

Berries	Gui-eh.
Hot	Edowh.
Cold	Edzah.
Island	Nouey.
Gun	Telkithy.
Powder	Telkithy counna.
Knife	Bess.
Axe	Thynlc.
Sun Moon	Sah.
Red	Deli couse.
Black	Dell zin.
Trade, or barter	Na-houn-ny.
Good	Leyzong.
Not good	Leyzong houliey.
Stinking	Geddey.
Bad, ugly	Slieney.
Long since	Galladinna.
Now, to-day	Ganneh.
To-morrow	Gambeh.
By-and-bye, or presently	Garahoulleh.
House, or lodge	Cooen.
Canoe	Shaluzee.
Door	The o ball.
Leather-lodge	N'abalay.
Chief	Buchahudry.
Mine	Zidzy.
His	Bedzy.
Yours	Nuntzy.
Large	Unshaw.
Small, or little	Chautah.
I love you	Ba eioinichdinh.
I hate you	Bucnoinichadinh hillay.
I am to be pitied	Est-chounest-hinay.
My relation	Sy lod, innay.
Give me water	Too hanniltu.
Give me meat	Beds-hanniltu.

Give me fish	Sloech anneltu.
Give me meat to eat	Bid Barheether.
Give me water to drink	To Barhithen.
It is far off	Netha uzany.
Is it not far	Nilduay uzany.
It is near	Nitha-hillai.
How many	Nilduay.
What call you him, or that	Etlaneldey.
Come here	Etla houllia.
Pain, or suffering	Yeu dessay.
It's hard	I-yah.
You lie	Untzee.
What then	Eldaw-gueh.





A Map of
Mackenzies Track,
from
FORT CHIPEWYAN
to the
NORTH SEA
in 1789.
Deserted Encampments
THE QUARRELLERS
A Manitoe
HARE INDIANS
NATH ANA INDIANS
MOUNTAIN INDIANS
INLAND INDIANS
BEAVER INDIANS
Horn Mountains
STRONG BOW INDIANS
GREAT SLAVE LAKE
Buffaloe River
Peace River
Clear Lake



JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE, &c.

CHAPTER I.

JUNE, 1789.

Wednesday, 3.—We embarked at nine in the morning, at Fort Chepewyan, on the South side of the Lake of the Hills, in latitude 58. 40. North, and longitude 110. 30. West from Greenwich, and compass has sixteen degrees variation East, in a canoe made of birch bark. The crew consisted of four Canadians, two of whom were attended by their wives, and a German; we were accompanied also by an Indian, who had acquired the title of English Chief, and his two wives, in a small canoe, with two young Indians; his followers in another small canoe. These men were engaged to serve us in the twofold capacity of interpreters and hunters. This chief has been a principal leader of his countrymen who were in the habit of carrying furs to Churchill Factory, Hudson's Bay, and till of late very much attached to the interest of that company. These circumstances procured him the appellation of the English Chief.

We were also accompanied by a canoe that I had equipped for the purpose of trade, and given the charge of it to M. Le Roux, one of the Company's clerks. In this I was obliged to ship part of our provision; which, with the clothing necessary for us on the voyage, a proper assortment of the articles of merchandise as presents, to ensure us a friendly reception among the Indians, and the ammunition and arms requisite for defence, as well as a supply for our hunters, were more than our own canoe could carry, but by the time we should part company, there was every reason to suppose that our expenditure would make sufficient room for the whole.

We proceeded twenty-one miles to the West, and then took a course of nine miles to North-North-West, when we entered the river, or one of the branches of the lake, of which there are several. We then steered North five miles, when our course changed for two miles to North-North-East, and here at seven in the evening we landed and pitched our tents. One of the hunters killed a goose, and a couple of ducks: at the same time the canoe was taken out of the water, to be gummed, which necessary business was effectually performed.

Thursday, 4.—We embarked at four this morning, and proceeded North-North-East half a mile, North one mile and a half, West

two miles, North-West two miles, West-North-West one mile and a half, North-North-West half a mile, and West-North-West two miles, when this branch loses itself in the Peace River. It is remarkable, that the currents of these various branches of the lake, when the Peace River is high, as in May and August, run into the lake, which, in the other months of the year returns its waters to them; whence, to this place, the branch is not more than two hundred yards wide, nor less than an hundred and twenty. The banks are rather low, except in one place, where an huge rock rises above them. The low land is covered with wood, such as white birch, pines of different kinds, with the poplar, three kinds of willow, and the liard.

The Peace River is upwards of a mile broad at this spot, and its current is stronger than that of the channel which communicates with the lake. It here, indeed, assumes the name of the Slave River.* The course of this day was as follows:—North-West two miles, North-North-West, through islands, six miles, North four miles and a half, North by East

*The Slave Indians, having been driven from their original country by their enemies, the Knisteneaux, along the borders of this part of the river, it received that title, though it by no means involves the idea of servitude, but was given to these fugitives as a term of reproach, that denoted more than common savageness.

two miles, West by North six miles, North one mile, North-East by East two miles, North one mile. We now descended a rapid, and proceeded North-West seven miles and a half, North-West nine miles, North by West six miles, North-West by West one mile and a half, North-West by North half a mile, North-North-West six miles, North one mile, North-West by West four miles, North-North-East one mile. Here we arrived at the mouth of the Dog River, where we landed, and unloaded our canoes, at half past seven in the evening, on the East side, and close by the rapids. At this station the river is near two leagues in breadth.

Friday, 5.—At three o'clock in the morning we embarked, but unloaded our canoes at the first rapid. When we had reloaded, we entered a small channel, which is formed by the islands, and, in about half an hour, we came to the carrying-place It is three hundred and eighty paces in length, and very commodious, except at the further end of it. We found some difficulty in reloading at this spot, from the large quantity of ice which had not yet thawed. From hence to the next carrying-place, called the *Portage d'Embarras*, is about six miles, and is occasioned by the drift wood filling up the small channel, which is one thousand and twenty paces in length; from hence to the next is one mile

and a half, while the distance to that which succeeds, does not exceed one hundred and fifty yards. It is about the same length as the last; and from hence to the carrying-place called the Mountain, is about four miles further; when we entered the great river. The smaller one, or the channel, affords by far the best passage, as it is without hazard of any kind; though I believe a shorter course would be found on the outside of the islands, and without so many carrying-places. That called the Mountain is three hundred and thirty-five paces in length; from thence to the next, named the Pelican, there is about a mile of dangerous rapids. The landing is very steep, and close to the fall. The length of this carrying-place is eight hundred and twenty paces.

The whole of the party were now employed in taking the baggage and the canoe up the hill. One of the Indian canoes went down the fall, and was dashed to pieces. The woman who had the management of it, by quitting it in time, preserved her life, though she lost the little property it contained.

The course from the place we quitted in the morning is about North-West, and comprehends a distance of fifteen miles. From hence to the next and last carrying-place, is about nine miles; in which distance there are three rapids: course North-West by West. The

carrying path is very bad, and five hundred and thirty-five paces in length. Our canoes being lightened, passed on the outside of the opposite island, which rendered the carrying of the baggage very short indeed, being not more than the length of a canoe. In the year 1786, five men were drowned, and two canoes and some packages lost, in the rapids on the other side of the river, which occasioned this place to be called the *Portage des Noyes.* They were proceeding to the Slave Lake, in the fall of that year, under the direction of Mr. Cuthbert Grant. We proceeded from hence six miles, and encamped on Point de Roche, at half past five in the afternoon. The men and Indians were very much fatigued; but the hunters had provided seven geese, a beaver, and four ducks.

Saturday, 6.—We embarked at half past two in the morning, and steered North-West by North twenty-one miles, North-West by West five miles, West-North-West four miles, West six miles, doubled a point North-North-East one mile, East five miles, North two miles, North-West by North one mile and a half, West-North-West three miles, North-East by East two miles; doubled a point one mile and a half, West by North nine miles, North-West by West six miles, North-North-West five miles; here we landed at six o'clock in the evening, unloaded, and

encamped. Nets were also set in a small adjacent river. We had an head wind during the greater part of the day and the weather was become so cold that the Indians were obliged to make use of their mittens. In this day's progress we killed seven geese and six ducks.

Sunday, 7.—At half past three we renewed our voyage, and proceeded West-North-West one mile, round an island one mile, North-West two miles and a half, South by West three miles, West-South-West one mile, South-West by South half a mile, North-West three miles, West-North-West three miles and a half, North seven miles and a half, North-West by North four miles, North two miles and a half, North-West by North two miles. The rain, which had prevailed for some time, now came on with such violence, that we were obliged to land and unload, to prevent the goods and baggage from getting wet; the weather, however, soon cleared up, so that we reloaded the canoe, and got under way. We now continued our course North ten miles, West one mile and a half, and North one mile and a half, when the rain came on again, and rendered it absolutely necessary for us to get on shore for the night, at about half past three. We had a strong North-North-East wind throughout the day, which greatly impeded us; M. Le

Roux, however, with his party, passed on in search of a landing place more agreeable to them. The Indians killed a couple of geese, and as many ducks. The rain continued through the remaining part of the day.

Monday, 8.—The night was very boisterous, and the rain did not cease till two in the afternoon of this day; but as the wind did not abate of its violence, we were prevented from proceeding till the morrow.

Tuesday, 9.—We embarked at half past two in the morning, the weather being calm and foggy. Soon after our two young men joined us, whom we had not seen for two days; but during their absence they had killed four beavers and ten geese. After a course of one mile North-West by North, we observed an opening on the right, which we took for a fork of the river, but it proved to be a lake. We returned and steered South-West by West one mile and a half, West-South-West one mile and a half, West one mile, when we entered a very small branch of the river on the East bank; at the mouth of which I was informed there had been a carrying-place, owing to the quantity of drift wood, which then filled up the passage, but has since been carried away. The course of this river is meandering, and tends to the North, and in about ten miles falls into the Slave Lake, where we arrived at nine in the

morning, when we found a great change in the weather, as it was become extremely cold. The lake was entirely covered with ice, and did not seem in any degree to have given way, but near the shore. The gnats and mosquitoes, which were very troublesome during our passage along the river, did not venture to accompany us to this colder region.

The banks of the river both above and below the rapids, were on both sides covered with the various kinds of wood common to this country, particularly the Western side; the land being lower and consisting of a rich black soil. This artificial ground is carried down by the stream, and rests upon drift wood, so as to be eight or ten feet deep. The eastern banks are more elevated, and the soil a yellow clay mixed with gravel; so that the trees are neither so large or numerous as on the opposite shore. The ground was not thawed above fourteen inches in depth; notwithstanding the leaf was at its full growth; while along the lake there was scarcely any appearance of verdure.

The Indians informed me, that, at a very small distance from either bank of the river, are very extensive plains, frequented by large herds of buffaloes; while the moose and reindeer keep in the woods that border on it. The beavers, which are in great numbers, build their habitations in the small lakes and

rivers, as, in the larger streams, the ice carries every thing along with it, during the spring. The mud-banks in the river are covered with wild fowl; and we this morning killed two swans, ten geese, and one beaver, without suffering the delay of an hour; so that we might have soon filled the canoe with them, if that had been our object.

From the small river we steered East, along the inside of a long sand-bank, covered with drift wood and enlivened by a few willows, which stretches on as far as the houses erected by Messrs. Grant and Le Roux, in 1786. We often ran aground, as for five successive miles the depth of the water nowhere exceeded three feet. There we found our people, who had arrived early in the morning, and whom we had not seen since the preceding Sunday. We now unloaded the canoe, and pitched our tents, as there was every appearance that we should be obliged to remain here for some time. I then ordered the nets to be set, as it was absolutely necessary that the stores provided for our future voyage should remain untouched. The fish we now caught were carp, poisson inconnu, white fish, and trout.

Wednesday, 10.—It rained during the greatest part of the preceding night, and the weather did not clear up till the afternoon of this day. This circumstance had very much

weakened the ice, and I sent two of the Indians on an hunting party to a lake at the distance of nine miles, which, they informed me, was frequented by animals of various kinds. Our fishery this day was not so abundant as it had been on the preceding afternoon.

Thursday, 11.—The weather was fine and clear with a strong westerly wind. The women were employed in gathering berries of different sorts, of which there are a great plenty; and I accompanied one of my people to a small adjacent island, where we picked up some dozens of swan, geese, and duck-eggs; we also killed a couple of ducks and a goose.

In the evening the Indians returned, without having see any of the larger animals. A swan and a grey crane were the only fruits of their expedition. We caught no other fish but a small quantity of pike, which is too common to be a favourite food with the people of the country. The ice moved a little to the eastward.

Friday, 12.—The weather continued the same as yesterday, and the mosquitoes began to visit us in great numbers. The ice moved again in the same direction, and I ascended an hill, but could not perceive that it was broken in the middle of the lake. The hunters killed a goose and three ducks.

Saturday, 13.—The weather was cloudy, and the wind changeable till about sunset, when it settled in the North. It drove back the ice which was now very much broken along the shore, and covered our nets. One of the hunters who had been at the Slave River the preceding evening, returned with three beavers and fourteen geese. He was accompanied by three families of Indians, who left Athabasca the same day as myself: they did not bring me any fowl; and they pleaded in excuse, that they had travelled with so much expedition, as to prevent them from procuring sufficient provisions for themselves. By a meridian line, I found the variation of the compass to be about twenty degrees East.

Sunday, 14.—The weather was clear and the wind remained in the same quarter. The ice was much broken, and driven to the side of the lake, so that we were apprehensive for the loss of our nets, as they could not, at present, be extricated. At sunset there was an appearance of a violent gust of wind from the southward, as the sky became on a sudden, in that quarter, of a very dusky blue colour, and the lightning was very frequent. But instead of wind there came on a very heavy rain, which promised to diminish the quantity of broken ice.

Monday, 15.—In the morning, the bay still

continued to be so full of ice, that we could not get at our nets. About noon, the wind veered to the Westward, and not only uncovered the nets, but cleared a passage to the opposite islands. When we raised the nets we found them very much shattered, and but few fish taken. We now struck our tents, and embarked at sunset, when we made the traverse, which was about eight miles North-East by North, in about two hours. At half-past eleven P. M. we landed on a small island and proceed to gum the canoe. At this time the atmosphere was sufficiently clear to admit of reading or writing without the aid of artificial light. We had not seen a star since the second day after we left Athabasca. About twelve o'clock, the moon made its appearance above the tops of the trees, the lower horn being in a state of eclipse, which continued for about six minutes, in a cloudless sky.

I took soundings three times in the course of the traverse, when I found six fathoms water, with a muddy bottom.

Tuesday, 16.—We were prevented from embarking this morning by a very strong wind from the North, and the vast quantity of floating ice. Some trout were caught with the hook and line, but the net was not so successful. I had an observation which gave 61. 28. North latitude.

The wind becoming moderate, we embarked about one, taking a North-West course, through islands of ten miles, in which we took in a considerable quantity of water. After making several traverses, we landed at five P. M., and having pitched our tents, the hooks, lines, and nets were immediately set. During the course of the day there was occasional thunder.

Wednesday, 17.—We proceeded, and taking up our nets as we passed, we found no more than seventeen fish, and were stopped within a mile by the ice. The Indians, however, brought us back to a point where our fishery was very successful. They proceeded also on a hunting party, as well as to discover a passage among the islands; but at three in the afternoon they returned without having succeeded in either object. We were, however, in expectation, that, as the wind blew very strong, it would force a passage. About sunset, the weather became overcast, with thunder, lightning, and rain.

Thursday, 18.—The nets were taken up at four this morning with abundance of fish, and we steered North-West four miles, where the ice again prevented our progress. A South-East wind drove it among the islands, in such a manner as to impede our passage, and we could perceive at some distance ahead,

that it was but little broken. We now set our nets in four fathom water. Two of our hunters had killed a rein-deer and its fawn. They had met with two Indian families, and in the evening, a man belonging to one of them, paid us a visit; he informed me, that the ice had not stirred on the side of the island opposite to us. These people live entirely on fish, and were waiting to cross the lake as soon as it should be clear of ice.

Friday, 19.—This morning our nets were unproductive, as they yielded us no more than six fish, which were of a very bad kind. In the forenoon, the Indians proceeded to the large island opposite to us, in search of game. The weather was cloudy, and the wind changeable; at the same time, we were pestered by mosquitoes, though, in a great measure, surrounded with ice.

Saturday, 20.—We took up our nets, but without any fish. It rained very hard during the night and this morning: nevertheless, M. Le Roux and his people went back to the point which we had quitted on the 18th, but I did not think it prudent to move As I was watching for a passage through the ice, I promised to send for them when I could obtain it. It rained at intervals till about five o'clock; when we loaded our canoe, and steered for the large island, West six miles

When we came to the point of it, we found a great quantity of ice; we, however, set our nets, and soon caught plenty of fish. In our way thither we met our hunters, but they had taken nothing. I took soundings at an hundred yards from the island, when we were in twenty-one fathom water. Here we found abundance of cranberries and small spring onions. I now despatched two men for M. Le Roux, and his people.

Sunday, 21.—A Southerly wind blew through the night, and drove the ice to the Northward. The two men whom I had sent to M. Le Roux, returned at eight this morning; they parted with him at a small distance from us, but the wind blew so hard, that he was obliged to put to shore. Having a glimpse of the sun, when it was twelve by my watch, I found the latitude 61. 34. North latitude. At two in the afternoon, M. Le Roux and his people arrived. At five, the ice being almost all driven past to the Northward, we accordingly embarked, and steered West fifteen miles, through much broken ice, and on the outside of the islands, though it appeared to be very solid to the North-East. I sounded three times in this distance, and found it seventy-five, forty-four, and sixty fathom water. We pitched our tents on one of a cluster of small islands that were within three miles of the main land,

which we could not reach in consequence of the ice.

We saw some rein-deer on one of these islands, and our hunters went in pursuit of them, when they killed five large and two small ones, which was easily accomplished, as the animals had no shelter to which they could run for protection. They had, without doubt, crossed the ice to this spot, and the thaw coming on had detained them there, and made them an easy prey to the pursuer. This island was accordingly named Isle de Carreboeuf.

I sat up the whole of this night to observe the setting and rising of the sun. That orb was beneath the horizon four hours twenty-two minutes, and rose North 20. East by compass. It, however, froze so hard, that, during the sun's disappearance, the water was covered with ice half a quarter of an inch thick.

Monday, 22.—We embarked at half past three in the morning, and rounding the outside of the islands, steered North-West thirteen miles along the ice, edging in for the main land, the wind West, then West two miles; but it blew so hard as to oblige us to land on an island at half past nine, from whence we could just distinguish land to the South-East, at the distance of about twelve leagues; though we could not determine

whether it was a continuation of the islands, or the shores of the lake.* I took an observation at noon, which gave me 61. 53. North, the variation of the compass being, at the same time, about two points. M. Le Roux's people having provided two bags of *pemmican*† to be left in the island against their return; it was called *Isle a la Cache.*

The wind being moderated, we proceeded again at half past two in the afternoon, and steering West by North among the islands, made a course of eighteen miles. We encamped at eight o'clock on a small island, and since eight in the morning had not passed any ice. Though the weather was far from being warm, we were tormented, and our rest interrupted, by the host of mosquitoes that accompanied us.

* Sometimes the land looms, so that there may be a great deception as to the distance; and I think this was the case at present.

† Flesh dried in the sun, and afterwards pounded for the convenience of carriage.

CHAPTER II.

JUNE, 1789.

Tuesday, 23.—Towards morning, the Indians who had not been able to keep up with us the preceding day, now joined us, and brought two swans and a goose. At half past three we re-embarked, and steering West by North a mile and an half, with a Northerly wind, we came to the foot of a traverse across a deep bay, West five miles, which receives a considerable river at the bottom of it; the distance about twelve miles. The North-West side of the bay was covered with many small islands that were surrounded with ice; but the wind driving it a little off the land, we had a clear passage on the inside of them. We steered South-West nine miles under sail, then North-West nearly, through the islands, forming a course of sixteen miles. We landed on the main land at half past two in the afternoon at three lodges of Red-Knife Indians, so called from their copper knives. They informed us, that there were many more lodges of their friends at no great distance; and one of the Indians set off to fetch them: they also said, that we should see no more of them at present; as the Slave and Beaver In-

dians, as well as others of the tribe, would not be here till the time that the swans cast their feathers. In the afternoon it rained a torrent.

Wednesday, 24.—M. Le Roux purchased of these Indians upwards of eight packs of good beaver and marten skins; and there were not above twelve of them qualified to kill beaver. The English chief got upwards of an hundred skins on the score of debts due to him, of which he had many outstanding in this country. Forty of them he gave on account of debts due by him since the winters of 1786 and 1787, at the Slave Lake; the rest he exchanged for rum and other necessary articles; and I added a small quantity of that liquor as an encouraging present to him and his young men. I had several consultations with these Copper Indian people, but could obtain no information that was material to our expedition; nor were they acquainted with any part of the river, which was the object of my research, but the mouth of it. In order to save as much time as possible in circumnavigating the bays, I engaged one of the Indians to conduct us; and I accordingly equipped him with various articles of clothing, etc. I also purchased a large new canoe, that he might embark with the two young Indians in my service.

This day, at noon, I took an observation,

which gave me 62. 24. North latitude; the variation of the compass being about twenty-six or twenty-seven degrees to the East.

In the afternoon I assembled the Indians, in order to inform them that I should take my departure on the following day; but that people would remain on the spot till their countrymen, whom they had mentioned, should arrive; and that, if they brought a sufficient quantity of skins to make it answer, the Canadians would return for more goods, with a view to winter here, and build a fort,* which would be continued as long as they should be found to deserve it. They assured me that it would be a great encouragement to them to have a settlement of ours in their country; and that they should exert themselves to the utmost to kill beaver, as they would then be certain of getting an adequate value for them. Hitherto, they said, the Chepewyans always pillaged them; or, at most, gave little or nothing for the fruits of their labour, which had greatly discouraged them; and that, in consequence of this treatment, they had no motive to pursue the beaver, but to obtain a sufficient quantity of food and raiment.

I now wrote to Messrs. Macleod and Mac-

*Fort is the name given to any establishment in this country.

kenzie, and addressed my papers to the former, at Athabasca.

Thursday, 25.—We left this place at three this morning, our canoe being deeply laden, as we had embarked some packages that had come in the canoes of M. Le Roux. We were saluted on our departure with some volleys of small arms, which we returned, and steered South by West straight across the bay, which is here no more than two miles and a half broad, but, from the accounts of the natives, it is fifteen leagues in depth, with a much greater breadth in several parts, and full of islands. I sounded in the course of the traverse and found six fathoms with a sandy bottom. Here, the land has a very different appearance from that on which we have been since we entered the lake. Till we arrived here there was one continued view of high hills and islands of solid rock, whose surface was occasionally enlivened with moss, shrubs, and a few scattered trees, of a very stinted growth, from an insufficiency of soil to nourish them. But, notwithstanding their barren appearance, almost every part of them produces berries of various kinds, such as cranberries, juniper berries, raspberries, partridge berries, gooseberries, and the pathegomenan, which is something like a raspberry; it grows on a small stalk about a foot and a half high, in wet, mossy spots. These fruits

are in great abundance, though they are not to be found in the same places, but in situations and aspects suited to their peculiar natures.

The land which borders the lake in this part is loose and sandy, but is well covered with wood, composed of trees of a larger growth: it gradually rises from the shore, and at some distance forms a ridge of high land running along the coast, thick with wood and a rocky summit rising above it.

We steered South-South-East nine miles, when we were very much interrupted by drifting ice, and with some difficulty reached an island, where we landed at seven. I immediately proceeded to the further part of it, in order to discover if there was any probability of our being able to get from thence in the course of the day. It is about five miles in circumference, and I was very much surprised to find that the greater part of the wood with which it was formerly covered, had been cut down within twelve or fifteen years, and that the remaining stumps were become altogether rotten. On making inquiry concerning the cause of this extraordinary circumstance, the English chief informed me, that several winters ago, many of the Slave Indians inhabited the islands that were scattered over the bay, as the surrounding waters abound with fish throughout the

year, but that they had been driven away by the Knisteneaux, who continually made war upon them. If an establishment is to be made in this country, it must be in the neighbourhood of this place, on account of the wood and fishery.

At eleven we ventured to re-embark, as the wind had driven the greatest part of the ice past the island, though we still had to encounter some broken pieces of it, which threatened to damage our canoe. We steered South-East from point to point across five bays, twenty-one miles. We took soundings several times, and found from six to ten fathom water. I observed that the country gradually descended inland, and was still better covered with wood than in the higher parts.—Wherever we approached the land, we perceived deserted lodges. The hunters killed two swans and a beaver; and at length we landed at eight o'clock in the evening, when we unloaded and gummed our canoe.

Friday, 26.—We continued our route at five o'clock, steering South-East for ten miles across two deep bays; then South-South-East, with islands in sight to the Eastward. We then traversed another bay in a course of three miles, then South one mile to a point which we named the Detour, and South-South-West four miles and an half, when there was an heavy swell of the lake. Here I took an

observation, when we were in 61 40. North latitude. We then proceeded South-West four miles, and West-South-West among islands: on one of which our Indians killed two rein-deer, but we lost three hours aft wind in going for them: this course was nine miles. About seven in the evening we were obliged to land for the night, as the wind became too strong from the South-East. We thought we could observe land in this direction when the wind was coming on from some distance. On the other side of the Detour, the land is low, and the shore is flat and dangerous, there being no safe place to land in bad weather, except in the islands which we had just passed. There seemed to be plenty of moose and rein-deer in this country, as we saw their tracks wherever we landed. There are also great numbers of white partridges, which were at this season of a grey colour, like that of the moor-fowl. There was some floating ice in the lake, and the Indians killed a couple of swans.

Saturday, 27.—At three this morning we were in the canoe, after having passed a very restless night from the persecution of the mosquitoes The weather was fine and calm, and our course West-South-West nine miles, when we came to the foot of a traverse, the opposite point in sight bearing South-West, distance twelve miles. The bay is at least

eight miles deep, and this course two miles more, in all ten miles. It now became very foggy, and as the bays were so numerous, we landed for two hours, when the weather cleared up, and we took the advantage of steering South thirteen miles, and passed several small bays, when we came to the point of a very deep one, whose extremity was not discernible; the land bearing South from us, at the distance of about ten miles. Our guide not having been here for eight winters, was at a loss what course to take, though as well as he could recollect, this bay appeared to be the entrance of the river. Accordingly, we steered down it, about West-South-West, till we were involved in a field of broken ice. We still could not discover the bottom of the bay, and a fog coming on, made it very difficult for us to get to an island to the South-West, and it was nearly dark when we effected a landing.

Sunday, 28.—At a quarter past three we were again on the water, and as we could perceive no current setting into this bay, we made the best of our way to the point that bore South from us yesterday afternoon. We continued our course South three miles more, South by West seven miles, West fifteen miles, when by observation we were in 61 degrees North latitude; we then proceeded West-North-West two miles. Here we came

to the foot of a traverse, the opposite land bearing South-West, distance fourteen miles, when we steered into a deep bay, about a westerly course; and though we had no land ahead in sight, we indulged the hope of finding a passage, which, according to the Indian, would conduct us to the entrance of the river.

Having a strong wind aft, we lost sight of the Indians, nor could we put on shore to wait for them, without risking material damage to the canoe, till we ran to the bottom of the bay, and were forced among the rushes; when we discovered that there was no passage there. In about two or three hours they joined us, but would not approach our fire, as there was no good ground for an encampment: they emptied their canoe of the water which it had taken in, and continued their route, but did not encamp till sunset The English chief was very much irritated against the Red-Knife Indian, and even threatened to murder him, for having undertaken to guide us in a course of which he was ignorant; nor had we any reason to be satisfied with him, though he still continued to encourage us, by declaring that he recollected having passed from the river, through the woods, to the place where he had landed. In the blowing weather to-day, we were obliged to make use of our large kettle, to keep our canoe from filling, although we did not carry above

three feet sail. The Indians very narrowly escaped.

Monday, 29.—We embarked at four this morning, and steered along the South-West side of the bay. At half past five we reached the extremity of the point, which we doubled, and found it to be the branch or passage that was the object of our search, and occasioned by a very long island, which separates it from the main channel of the river. It is about half a mile across, and not more than six feet in depth; the water appeared to abound in fish, and was covered with fowl, such as swans, geese, and several kinds of ducks, particularly black ducks, that were very numerous, but we could not get within gun shot of them.

The current, though not very strong, set us South-West by West, and we followed this course fourteen miles, till we passed the point of the long island, where the Slave Lake discharges itself, and is ten miles in breadth. There is not more than from five to two fathom water, so that when the lake is low, it may be presumed the greatest part of this channel must be dry. The river now turns to the Westward, becoming gradually narrower for twenty-four miles, till it is not more than half a mile wide; the current, however, is then much stronger, and the sounding were three fathom and a half. The

land on the North shore from the lake is low, and covered with trees; that to the South is much higher, and has also an abundance of wood. The current is very strong, and the banks are of an equal height on both sides, consisting of a yellow clay, mixed with small stones; they are covered with large quantities of burned wood, lying on the ground, and young poplar trees, that have sprung up since the fire that destroyed the larger wood. It is a very curious and extraordinary circumstance, that land covered with spruce pine, and white birch, when laid waste by fire, should subsequently produce nothing but poplars, where none of that species of tree were previously to be found.

A stiff breeze from the Eastward drove us on at a great rate under sail, in the same course, though obliged to wind among the islands. We kept the North channel for about ten miles, whose current is much stronger than that of the South; so that the latter is consequently the better road to come up. Here the river widened, and the wind dying away, we had recourse to our paddles. We kept our course to the North-West, on the North side of the river, which is here much wider, and assumes the form of a small lake; we could not, however, discover an opening in any direction, so that we were at a loss what course to take, as our Red-Knife

Indian had never explored beyond our present situation. He at the same time informed us that a river falls in from the North, which takes its rise in the Horn Mountain, now in sight, which is the country of the Beaver Indians; and that he and his relations frequently meet on that river. He also added, that there are very extensive plains on both sides of it, which abound in buffaloes and moose deer.

By keeping this course, we got into shallows, so that we were forced to steer to the left, till we recovered deep water, which we followed till the channel of the river opened on us to the southward, we now made for the shore, and encamped soon after sunset. Our course ought to have been West fifteen miles, since we took to the paddle, the Horn Mountains bearing from us North-West, and running North-North-East and South-South-West. Our soundings, which were frequent during the course of the day, were from three to six fathoms water. The hunters killed two geese and a swan: it appeared, indeed, that great numbers of fowls breed in the islands which we had passed.

Tuesday, 30.—At four this morning we got under way, the weather being fine and calm. Our course was South-West by South thirty-six miles. On the South side of the river is a ridge of low mountains, running East and

West by compass. The Indians picked up a white goose, which appeared to have been lately shot with an arrow, and was quite fresh. We proceeded South-West by South six miles, and then came to a bay on our left, which is full of small islands, and appeared to be the entrance of a river from the South. Here the ridge of mountains terminates. This course was fifteen miles.

At six in the afternoon there was an appearance of bad weather; we landed therefore, for the night; but before we could pitch our tents, a violent tempest came on, with thunder, lightning, and rain, which, however, soon ceased, but not before we had suffered the inconvenience of being drenched by it. The Indians were very much fatigued, having been employed in running after wild fowl, which had lately cast their feathers; they, however, caught five swans, and the same number of geese. I sounded several times in the course of the day, and found from four to six fathoms water.

CHAPTER III.

JULY, 1789.

Wednesday, 1. At half past four in the morning we continued our voyage, and in a short time found the river narrowed to about half a mile. Our course was Westerly among islands, with a strong current. Though the land is high on both sides, the banks are not perpendicular. This course was twenty-one miles; and on sounding we found nine fathoms water. We then proceeded West-North-West nine miles, and passed a river upon the South-East side; we sounded, and found twelve fathoms; and then we went North-West by West three miles. Here I lost my lead, which had fastened at the bottom, with part of the line, the current running so strong that we could not clear it with eight paddles, and the strength of the line, which was equal to four paddles. Continued North by West five miles, and saw a high mountain, bearing South from us; we then proceeded North-West by North four miles. We now passed a small river on the North side, then doubled a point to West-South-West. At one o'clock there came on lightning and thunder, with wind and rain, which ceased in about half an

hour, and left us almost deluged with wet, as we did not land. There were great quantities of ice along the banks of the river.

We landed upon a small island, where there were the poles of four lodges standing, which we concluded to have belonged to the Knisteneaux, on their war excursions, six or seven years ago. This course was fifteen miles West, to where the river of the Mountain falls in from the Southward. It appears to be a very large river, whose mouth is half a mile broad. About six miles further a small river flows in the same direction; and our whole course was twenty-four miles. We landed opposite to an island, the mountains to the Southward being in sight. As our canoe was deeply laden, and being also in daily expectation of coming to the rapids or falls, which we had been taught to consider with apprehension, we concealed two bags of pemmican in the opposite island, in the hope that they would be of future service to us. The Indians were of a different opinion, as they entertained no expectation of returning that season, when the hidden provisions would be spoiled. Near us were two Indian encampments of the last year. By the manner in which these people cut their wood, it appears that they have no iron tools. The current was very strong during the whole of this day's voyage, and in the article of pro-

visions two swans were all that the hunters were able to procure.

Thursday, 2.—The morning was very foggy: but at half past five we embarked; it cleared up, however, at seven, when we discovered that the water, from being very limpid and clear, was become dark and muddy. This alteration must have proceeded from the influx of some river to the Southward, but where these streams first blended their waters, the fog had prevented us from observing. At nine we perceived a very high mountain ahead, which appeared, on our nearer approach, to be rather a cluster of mountains, stretching as far as our view could reach to the Southward, and whose tops were lost in the clouds. At noon there was lightning, thunder, and rain, and at one, we came abreast of the mountains; their summits appeared to be barren and rocky, but their declivities were covered with wood; they appeared also to be sprinkled with white stones, which glistened in the sun, and were called by the Indians *manetoe aseniah*, or spirit stones. I suspected that they were Talc, though they possessed a more brilliant whiteness; on our return, however, these appearances were dissolved, as they were nothing more than patches of snow.

Our course had been West-South-West thirty miles and we proceeded with great

caution, as we continually expected to approach some great rapid or fall. This was such a prevalent idea, that all of us were occasionally persuaded that we heard those sounds which betokened a fall of water. Our course changed to West by North, along the mountains, twelve miles, North by West, twenty-one miles, and at eight o'clock in the evening, we went on shore for the night, on the North side of the river. We saw several encampments of the natives, some of which had been erected in the present spring, and others at some former period. The hunters killed only one swan and a beaver; the latter was the first of its kind which we had seen in this river. The Indians complained of the perseverance with which we pushed forward, and that they were not accustomed to such severe fatigue as it occasioned.

Friday, 3.—The rain was continual through the night, and did not subside till seven this morning, when we embarked and steered North-North-West for twelve miles, the river being enclosed by high mountains on either side. We had a strong head-wind, and the rain was so violent as to compel us to land at ten o'clock. According to my reckoning, since my last observation, we had run two hundred and seventeen miles West, and forty-four miles North. At a quarter past two the rain subsided, and we got again under way,

our former course continuing for five miles. Here a river fell in from the North, and in a short time the current became strong and rapid, running with great rapidity among rocky islands, which were the first that we had seen in this river, and indicated our near approach to rapids and falls. Our present course was North-West by North ten miles, North-West three miles, West-North-West twelve miles, and North-West three miles, when we encamped at eight in the evening, at the foot of an high hill, on the North shore, which in some parts rose perpendicular from the river. I immediately ascended it, accompanied by two men and some Indians, and in about an hour and an half, with very hard walking, we gained the summit, when I was very much surprised to find it crowned by an encampment. The Indians informed me, that it is the custom of the people who have no arms to choose these elevated spots for the places of their residence, as they can render them inaccessible to their enemies, particularly the Knisteneaux, of whom they are in continual dread. The prospect from this height was not so extensive as we expected, as it was terminated by a circular range of hills, of the same elevation as that on which we stood. The intervals between the hills were covered with small lakes, which were inhabited by great numbers of swans. We,

saw no trees but the pine and the birch, which were small in size and few in number.

We were obliged to shorten our stay here, from the swarms of mosquitoes which attacked us on all sides and were, indeed, the only inhabitants of the place. We saw several encampments of the natives in the course of the day, but none of them were of this year's establishment. Since four in the afternoon the current had been so strong, that it was at length, in an actual ebullition, and produced an hissing noise like a kettle of water in a moderate state of boiling. The weather was now become extremely cold, which was the more sensibly felt, as it had been very sultry sometime before and since we had been in the river.

Saturday, 4. At five in the morning, the wind and weather having undergone no alteration from yesterday, we proceeded North-West by West twenty-two miles, North-West six miles, North-West by North four miles and West-North-West five miles; we then passed the mouth of a small river from the North, and after doubling a point, South-West one mile, we passed the influx of another river from the South. We then continued our course North-North-West, with a mountain ahead, fifteen miles, when the opening of two rivers appeared opposite to each other: we then proceeded West four miles,

and North-West thirteen miles. At eight in the evening, we encamped on an island. The current was as strong through the whole of this day as it had been the preceding afternoon; nevertheless, a quantity of ice appeared along the banks of the river. The hunters killed a beaver and a goose, the former of which sunk before they could get to him: beavers, otters, bears, etc., if shot dead at once, remain like a bladder, but if there remains enough of life for them to struggle, they soon fill with water and go to the bottom.

Sunday, 5. The sun set last night at fifty-three minutes past nine, by my watch, and rose at seven minutes before two this morniing: we embarked soon after, steering North-North-West, through islands for five miles, and West four miles. The river then increased in breadth, and the current began to slacken in a small degree; after the continuation of our course, we perceived a ridge of high mountains before us, covered with snow. West-South-West ten miles, and at three-quarters past seven o'clock, we saw several smokes on the North shore, which we made every exertion to approach. As we drew nearer, we discovered the natives running about in great apparent confusion; some were making to the woods, and others hurrying to their canoes. Our hunters landed before us,

and addressed the few that had not escaped, in the Chipewyan language, which, so great was their confusion and terror, they did not appear to understand. But when they perceived that it was impossible to avoid us, as we were all landed, they made us signs to keep at a distance, with which we complied, and not only unloaded our canoe, but pitched our tents, before we made any attempt to approach them. During this interval, the English chief and his young men were employed in reconciling them to our arrival; and when they had recovered from their alarm of hostile intention, it appeared that some of them perfectly comprehended the language of our Indians; so that they were at length persuaded, though not without evident signs of reluctance and apprehension, to come to us. Their reception, however, soon dissipated their fears, and they hastened to call their fugitive companions from their hiding places.

There were five families, consisting of twenty-five or thirty persons, and of two different tribes, the Slave and Dog-rib Indians. We made them smoke, though it was evident they did not know the use of tobacco; we likewise supplied them with grog; but I am disposed to think, that they accepted our civilities rather from fear than inclination. We acquired a more effectual influence over them by the distribution of knives, beads,

awls, rings, gartering, fire-steels, flints, and hatchets; so that they became more familiar even than we expected, for we could not keep them out of our tents: though I did not observe that they attempted to purloin anything.

The information which they gave respecting the river, had so much of the fabulous, that I shall not detail it: it will be sufficient just to mention their attempts to persuade us that it would require several winters to get to the sea, and that old age would come upon us before the period of our return: we were also to encounter monsters of such horrid shapes and destructive powers as could only exist in their wild imaginations. They added, besides, that there were two impassable falls in the river, the first of which was about thirty days' march from us.

Though I placed no faith in these strange relations, they had a very different effect upon our Indians, who were already tired of the voyage. It was their opinion and anxious wish, that we should not hesitate to return. They said that, according to the information which they had received, there were very few animals in the country beyond us, and that as we proceeded, the scarcity would increase, and we should absolutely perish from hunger, if no other accident befel us. It was with no small trouble that

they were convinced of the folly of these reasonings; and by my desire, they induced one of those Indians to accompany us, in consideration of a small kettle, an axe, a knife, and some other articles.

Though it was now three o'clock in the afternoon, the canoe was ordered to be reloaded, and as we were ready to embark our new recruit was desired to prepare himself for his departure, which he would have declined; but as none of his friends would take his place, we may be said, after the delay of an hour, to have compelled him to embark. Previous to his departure a ceremony took place, of which I could not learn the meaning; he cut off a lock of his hair, and having divided it into three parts, he fastened one of them to the hair on the upper part of his wife's head, blowing on it three times with the utmost violence in his power, and uttering certain words. The other two he fastened with the same formalities, on the heads of his two children.

During our short stay with these people, they amused us with dancing, which they accompanied with their voices: but neither their song or their dance possessed much variety. The men and women formed a promiscuous ring. The former have a bone dagger or piece of stick between the fingers of the right hand, which they keep extended

above the head, in continual motion: the left they seldom raise so high, but work it backwards and forwards in a horizontal direction; while they leap about and throw themselves into various antic postures, to the measure of their music, always bringing their heels close to each other at every pause. The men occasionally howl in imitation of some animal, and he who continues this violent exercise for the longest period, appears to be considered as the best performer. The women suffer their arms to hang as without the power of motion. They are a meagre, ugly, ill-made people, particularly about the legs, which are very clumsy and covered with scabs. The latter circumstance proceeds probably from their habitually roasting them before the fire. Many of them appeared to be in a very unhealthy state, which is owing, as I imagine, to their natural filthiness. They are of a moderate stature, and as far as could be discovered, through the coat of dirt and grease that covers them, are of a fairer complexion than the generality of Indians who are the natives of warmer climates.

Some of them have their hair of a great length; while others suffer a long tress to fall behind, and the rest is cut so short as to expose their ears, but no other attention whatever is paid to it. The beards of some of the old men were long, and the rest had

them pulled out by the roots so that not a hair could be seen on their chins. The men have two double lines, either black or blue, tattooed upon each cheek, from the ear to the nose. The gristle of the latter is perforated so as to admit a goose-quill or a small piece of wood to be passed through the orifice. Their clothing is made of the dressed skins of the rein or moose-deer, though more commonly of the former. These they prepare in the hair for winter, and make shirts of both, which reach to the middle of their thighs. Some of them are decorated with an embroidery of very neat workmanship with porcupine quills and the hair of the moose, coloured red, black, yellow, and white. Their upper garments are sufficiently large to cover the whole body, with a fringe round the bottom, and are used both sleeping and awake. Their leggins come half way up the thigh, and are sewed to their shoes: they are embroidered round the ancle, and upon every seam. The dress of the women is the same as that of the men. The former have no covering on their private parts, except a tassel of leather which dangles from a small cord, as it appears, to keep off the flies, which would otherwise be very troublesome. Whether circumcision be practised among them, I cannot pretend to say, but the appearance of it was general among those whom I saw.

Their ornaments consist of gorgets, bracelets for the arms and wrists, made of wood, horn, or bone, belts, garters, and a kind of band to go round the head, composed of strips of leather of one inch and an half broad, embroidered with porcupine quills, and stuck round with the claws of bears or wild fowl inverted, to which are suspended a few short thongs of the skin of an animal that resembles the ermine, in the form of a tassel. Their cinctures and garters are formed of porcupine quills woven with sinews, in a style of peculiar skill and neatness: they have others of different materials, and more ordinary workmanship; and to both they attach a long fringe of strings of leather, worked round with hair of various colours. Their mittens are also suspended from the neck in a position convenient for the reception of the hands.

Their lodges are of a very simple structure: a few poles supported by a fork, and forming a semicircle at the bottom, with some branches or a piece of bark as a covering, constitutes the whole of their native architecture. They build two of these huts facing each other, and make the fire between them. The furniture harmonises with the buildings: they have a few dishes of wood, bark, or horn; the vessels in which they cook their victuals are in the shape of a gourd, narrow at the top and

wide at the bottom, and of watape,* fabricated in such a manner as to hold water, which is made to boil by putting a succession of red-hot stones into it. These vessels contain from two to six gallons. They have a number of small leather bags to hold their embroidered work, lines, and nets. They always keep a large quantity of the fibres of willow bark, which they work into thread on their thighs. Their nets are from three to forty fathoms in length, and from thirteen to thirty-six inches in depth. The short deep ones they set in the eddy current of rivers, and the long ones in the lakes. They likewise make lines of the sinews of the rein-deer, and manufacture their hooks from wood, horn, or bone. Their arms and weapons for hunting, are bows and arrows, spears, daggers, and pogamagans, or clubs. The bows are about five or six feet in length, and the strings are of sinews or raw skins. The arrows are two feet and an half long, including the barb, which is variously formed of bone, horn, flint, iron, or copper, and are winged with three feathers. The pole of the spears

* Watape is the name given to the divided roots of the spruce fir, which the natives weave into a degree of compactness that renders it capable of containing a fluid. The different parts of the bark canoes are also sewed together with this kind of filament.

is about six feet in length, and pointed with a barbed bone of ten inches. With this weapon they strike the rein-deer in the water. The daggers are flat and sharp-pointed, about twelve inches long, and made of horn or bone. The pogamagon is made of the horn of the rein-deer, the branches being all cut off, except that which forms the extremity. This instrument is about two feet in length, and is employed to despatch their enemies in battle, and such animals as they catch in snares placed for that purpose. These are about three fathom long, and are made of the green skin of the rein or moose-deer, but in such small strips, that it requires from ten to thirty strands to make this cord, which is not thicker than a cod-line; and strong enough to resist any animal that can be entangled in it. Snares or nooses are also made of sinews to take lesser animals, such as hares and white partridges, which are very numerous. Their axes are manufactured of a piece of brown or grey stone from six to eight inches long, and two inches thick. The inside is flat, and the outside round and tapering to an edge, an inch wide. They are fastened by the middle with the flat side inwards to a handle two feet long, with a cord of green skin. This is the tool with which they split their wood, and we believe, the only one of its kind among them. They

kindle fire, by striking together a piece of white or yellow pyrites and a flint stone, over a piece of touchwood. They are universally provided with a small bag containing these materials, so that they are in a continual state of preparation to produce fire. From the adjoining tribes, the Red-Knives and Chepewyans, they procure, in barter for marten skins and a few beaver, small pieces of iron, of which they manufacture knives, by fixing them at the end of a short stick, and with them and the beaver's teeth, they finish all their work. They keep them in a sheath hanging to their neck, which also contains their awls both of iron and horn.

Their canoes are small, pointed at both ends, flat-bottomed and covered in the fore part. They are made of the bark of the birch-tree and fir-wood, but of so slight a construction, that the man whom one of these light vessels bears on the water, can, in return, carry it over land without any difficulty. It is very seldom that more than one person embarks in them, nor are they capable of receiving more than two. The paddles are six feet long, one half of which is occupied by a blade of about eight inches wide. These people informed us, that we had passed large bodies of Indians who inhabit the mountains on the east side of the river.

At four in the afternoon we embarked, and

our Indian acquaintance promised to remain on the bank of the river till the fall, in case we should return. Our course was West-South-West, and we soon passed the Great-Bear-Lake River, which is of a considerable depth, and a hundred yards wide: its water is clear, and has the greenish hue of the sea. We had not proceeded more than six miles when we were obliged to land for the night, in consequence of an heavy gust of wind, accompanied with rain. We encamped beneath a rocky hill, on the top of which, according to the information of our guide, it blew a storm every day throughout the year. He found himself very uncomfortable in his new situation, and pretended that he was very ill, in order that he might be permitted to return to his relations. To prevent his escape it became necessary to keep a strict watch over him during the night.

Monday, 6.—At three o'clock, in a very raw and cloudy morning, we embarked, and steered West-South-West four miles, West four miles, West-North-West five miles, West eight miles, West by South, sixteen miles, West twenty-seven miles, South-West nine miles, then West six miles, and encamped at half past seven. We passed through numerous islands, and had the ridge of snowy mountains always in sight. Our conductor informed us that great numbers of

bears and small white buffaloes frequent those mountains, which are also inhabited by Indians. We encamped in a similar situation to that of the preceding evening, beneath another high rocky hill, which I attempted to ascend, in company with one of the hunters, but before we had got half way to the summit, we were almost suffocated by clouds of mosquitoes, and were obliged to return. I observed, however, that a river flowed from the Westward: I also discovered a strong rippling current or rapid which ran close under a steep precipice of the hill.

Tuesday, 7.—We embarked at four in the morning, and crossed to the opposite side of the river, in consequence of the rapid; but we might have spared ourselves this trouble, as there would have been no danger in continuing our course, without any circuitous deviation whatever. This circumstance convinced us of the erroneous account given by the natives of the great and approaching dangers of our navigation, as this rapid was stated to be one of them. Our course was now North-North-West three miles. West-North-West four miles, North-West ten miles, North two miles, when we came to a river that flowed from the Eastward. Here we landed at an encampment of four fires, all the inhabitants of which ran off with the utmost speed, except an old man and an old

woman. Our guide called aloud to the fugitives, and entreated them to stay, but without effect: the old man, however, did not hesitate to approach us, and represented himself as too far advanced in life, and too indifferent about the short time he had to remain in the world, to be very anxious about escaping from any danger that threatened him; at the same time he pulled his grey hairs from his head by handfuls to distribute among us, and implored our favour for himself and his relations. Our guide, however, at length removed his fears, and persuaded him to recall the fugitives, who consisted of eighteen people; whom I reconciled to me on their return with presents of beads, knives, awls, &c., with which they appeared to be greatly delighted. They differed in no respect from those whom we had already seen; nor were they deficient in hospitable attentions; they provided us with fish, which was very well boiled, and cheerfully accepted by us. Our guide still sickened after his home, and was so anxious to return thither, that we were under the necessity of forcing him to embark.

These people informed us that we were close to another great rapid, and that there were several lodges of their relations in its vicinity.

Four canoes, with a man in each, followed us, to point out the particular channels we should follow for the secure passage of the

rapid. They also abounded in discouraging stories concerning the dangers and difficulties which we were to encounter.

From hence our course was North-North-East two miles, when the river appeared to be enclosed, as it were, with lofty, perpendicular, white rocks, which did not afford us a very agreeable prospect. We now went on shore, in order to examine the rapid, but did not perceive any signs of it, though the Indians still continued to magnify its dangers: however, as they ventured down it, in their small canoes, our apprehensions were consequently removed, and we followed them at some distance, but did not find any increase in the rapidity of the current; at length the Indians informed us that we should find no other rapid but that which was now bearing us along. The river at this place is not above three hundred yards in breadth, but on sounding I found fifty fathoms water. At the two rivulets that offer their tributary streams from either side, we found six families, consisting of about thirty-five persons, who gave us an ample quantity of excellent fish, which were, however, confined to white fish, the poisson inconnu, and another of a round form and greenish colour, which was about fourteen inches in length. We gratified them with a few presents, and continued our voyage. The men, however, followed us in fifteen canoes.

This narrow channel is three miles long, and its course North-North-East. We then steered North three miles, and landed at an encampment of three or more families, containing twenty-two persons, which was situated on the bank of a river, of a considerable appearance, which came from the Eastward. We obtained hares and partridges from these people, and presented in return such articles as greatly delighted them. They very much regretted that they had no goods or merchandise to exchange with us, as they had left them at a lake, from whence the river issued, and in whose vicinity some of their people were employed in setting snares for rein-deer. They engaged to go for their articles of trade, and would wait our return, which we assumed them would be within two months. There was a youth among them in the capacity of a slave, whom our Indians understood much better than any of the natives of this country whom they had yet seen; he was invited to accompany us, but took the first opportunity to conceal himself, and we saw him no more.

We now steered West five miles, when we again landed, and found two families, containing seven people, but had reason to believe that there were others hidden in the woods. We received from them two dozen of hares, and they were about to boil two

more, which they also gave us. We were not ungrateful for their kindness, and left them. Our course was now North-West four miles, and at nine we landed and pitched our tents, when one of our people killed a grey crane. Our conductor renewed his complaints, not, as he assured us, from any apprehension of our ill-treatment, but of the Esquimaux, whom he represented as a very wicked and malignant people; who would put us all to death. He added, also, that it was but two summers since a large party of them came up this river, and killed many of his relations. Two Indians followed us from the last lodges.

Wednesday, 8.—At half past two in the morning we embarked, and steered a Westerly course, and soon after put ashore at two lodges of nine Indians. We made them a few trifling presents, but without disembarking, and had proceeded but a small distance from thence, when we observed several smokes beneath a hill, on the North shore, and on our approach we perceived the natives climbing the ascent to gain the woods. The Indians, however, in the two small canoes which were ahead of us, having assured them of our friendly intentions, they returned to their fires, and we disembarked. Several of them were clad in hare-skins, but in every other circumstance they resembled those whom we had already seen. We were, how-

ever, informed that they were of a different tribe, called the Hare Indians, as hares and fish are their principal support, from the scarcity of rein-deer and beaver, which are the only animals of the larger kind that frequent this part of the country. They were twenty-five in number; and among them was a woman who was afflicted with an abscess in the belly, and reduced, in consequence, to a mere skeleton: at the same time several old women were singing and howling around her; but whether these noises were to operate as a charm for her cure, or merely to amuse and console her, I do not pretend to determine. A small quantity of our usual presents were received by them with the greatest satisfaction.

Here we made an exchange of our guide, who had become so troublesome that we were obliged to watch him night and day, except when he was upon the water. The man, however, who had agreed to go in his place soon repented of his engagement, and endeavoured to persuade us that some of his relations further down the river, would readily accompany us, and were much better acquainted with the river than himself. But, as he had informed us ten minutes before that we should see no more of his tribe, we paid very little attention to his remonstrances, and compelled him to embark.

In about three hours a man overtook us in a canoe, and we suspected that his object was to facilitate, in some way or other, the escape of our conductor. About twelve we also observed an Indian walking along the North-East shore, when the small canoes paddled towards him. We accordingly followed, and found three men, three women, and two children, who had been on an hunting expedition. They had some flesh of the rein-deer, which they offered to us, but it was so rotten, as well as offensive to the smell, that we excused ourselves from accepting it. They had also their wonderful stories of danger and terror, as well as their countrymen, whom we had already seen; and we were now informed, that behind the opposite island there was a Manitoe or spirit, in the river, which swallowed every person that approached it. As it would have employed half a day to have indulged our curiosity in proceeding to examine this phenomenon, we did not deviate from our course, but left these people with the usual presents, and proceeded on our voyage. Our course and distance this day were West twenty-eight miles, West-North-West twenty-three miles, West-South-West six miles, West by North five miles, South-West four miles, and encamped at eight o'clock. A fog prevailed the greater part of the day, with frequent showers of small rain.

CHAPTER IV.

JULY, 1789.

Thursday, 9.—Thunder and rain prevailed during the night, and, in the course of it, our guide deserted; we therefore compelled another of these people, very much against his will, to supply the place of his fugitive countryman. We also took away the paddles of one of them who remained behind, that he might not follow us on any scheme of promoting the escape of his companion, who was not easily pacified. At length, however, we succeeded in the act of conciliation, and at half past three quitted our station. In a short time we saw a smoke on the East shore, and directed our course towards it. Our new guide began immediately to call to the people that belonged to it in a particular manner, which we did not comprehend. He informed us that they were not of his tribe, but were a very wicked, malignant people, who would beat us cruelly, pull our hair with great violence from our heads, and maltreat us in various other ways.

The men waited our arrival, but the women and children took to the woods. There were but four of these people, and previous

to our landing, they all harangued us at the same moment, and apparently with violent anger and resentment. Our hunters did not understand them, but no sooner had our guide addressed them, than they were appeased. I presented them with beads, awls, etc., and when the women and children returned from the woods, they were gratified with similar articles. There were fifteen of them; and of a more pleasing appearance than any which we had hitherto seen, as they were healthy, full of flesh, and clean in their persons. Their language was somewhat different, but I believe chiefly in the accent, for they and our guide conversed intelligibly with each other; and the English chief clearly comprehended one of them, though he was not himself understood.

Their arms and utensils differ but little from those which have been described in a former chapter. The only iron they have is in small pieces, which serve them for knives. They obtain this metal from the Esquimaux Indians. Their arrows are made of very light wood, and are winged only with two feathers; their bows differed from any which we had seen, and we understood that they were furnished by the Esquimaux, who are their neighbours: they consist of two pieces, with a very strong cord of sinews along the back, which is tied in several places, to preserve

its shape; when this cord becomes wet, it requires a strong bow-string, and a powerful arm to draw it. The vessel in which they prepare their food, is made of a thin frame of wood, and of an oblong shape; the bottom is fixed in a groove, in the same manner as a cask. Their shirts are not cut square at the bottom, but taper to a point, from the belt downwards as low as the knee, both before and behind, with a border, embellished with a short fringe. They use also another fringe, similar to that which has been already described, with the addition of the stone of a grey farinaceous berry, of the size and shape of a large barley-corn: it is of a brown colour, and fluted, and being bored is run on each string of the fringe; with this they decorate their shirts, by sewing it in a semicircle on the breast and back, and crossing over both shoulders; the sleeves are wide and short, but the mittens supply their deficiency, as they are long enough to reach over a part of the sleeve, and are commodiously suspended by a cord from the neck. If their leggins were made with waistbands, they might with great propriety be denominated trousers: they fasten them with a cord round the middle, so that they appear to have a sense of decency which their neighbours can not boast. Their shoes are sewed to their leggins, and decorated on every seam. One

of the men was clad in a shirt made of the skins of the musk-rat. The dress of the women is the same as that of the men, except in their shirts, which are longer, and without the finishing of a fringe on their breast. Their peculiar mode of tying the hair is as follows:—that which grows on the temples, or the fore part of the skull, is formed into two queues, hanging down before the ears; that of the scalp or crown is fashioned in the same manner to the back of the neck, and is then tied with the rest of the hair, at some distance from the head. A thin cord is employed for these purposes, and very neatly worked with hair, artificially coloured. The women, and, indeed, some of the men, let their hair hang loose on their shoulders, whether it be long or short.

We purchased a couple of very large moose skins from them, which were very well dressed; indeed we did not suppose that there were any of those animals in the country; and it appears from the accounts of the natives themselves, that they are very scarce. As for the beaver, the existence of such a creature does not seem to be known by them. Our people bought shirts of them, and many curious articles, &c. They presented us with a most delicious fish, which was less than a herring, and very beautifully spotted with black and yellow: its dorsal fin reached from

the head to the tail; in its expanded state takes a triangular form, and is variegated with the colours that enliven the scales: the head is very small, and the mouth is armed with sharp-pointed teeth.

We prevailed on the native, whose language was most intelligible, to accompany us. He informed us that we should sleep ten nights more before we arrived at the sea; that several of his relations resided in the immediate vicinity of this part of the river, and that in three nights we should meet with the Esquimaux, with whom they had formerly made war, but were now in a state of peace and amity. He mentioned the last Indians whom we had seen in terms of great derision; describing them as being no better than old women, and as abominable liars; which coincided with the notion we already entertained of them.

As we pushed off, some of my men discharged their fowling pieces, that were only loaded with powder, at the report of which the Indians were very much alarmed, as they had not before heard the discharge of firearms. This circumstance had such an effect upon our guide, that we had reason to apprehend he would not fulfil his promise. When, however, he was informed that the noise which he had heard was a signal of friendship, he was persuaded to embark in

his own small canoe, though he had been offered a seat in ours.

Two of his companions, whom he represented as his brothers, followed us in their canoes; and they amused us not only with their native songs, but with others, in imitation of the Esquimaux; and our new guide was so enlivened by them, that the antics he performed, in keeping time to the singing, alarmed us with continual apprehension that his boat must upset: but he was not long content with his confined situation, and paddling up alongside our canoe, requested us to receive him in it, though but a short time before he had resolutely refused to accept our invitation. No sooner had he entered our canoe, than he began to perform an Esquimaux dance, to our no small alarm. He was, however, soon prevailed upon to be more tranquil; when he began to display various indecencies, according to the customs of the Esquimaux, of which he boasted an intimate acquaintance. On our putting to shore, in order to leave his canoe, he informed us, that on the opposite hill the Esquimaux, three winters before, killed his grandfather. We saw a fox, and a ground-hog on the hill, the latter of which the brother of our guide shot with his bow and arrow.

About four in the afternoon we perceived a smoke on the West shore, when we traversed

and landed. The natives made a most terrible uproar, talking with great vociferation, and running about as if they were deprived of their senses, while the greater part of the women, with the children, fled away. Perceiving the disorder which our appearance occasioned among these people, we had waited some time before we quitted the canoe; and I have no doubt, if we had been without people to introduce us, that they would have attempted some violence against us; for when the Indians send away their women and children, it is always with a hostile design. At length we pacified them with the usual presents, but they preferred beads to any of the articles that I offered them; particularly such as were of a blue colour; and one of them even requested to exchange a knife which I had given him for a small quantity of those ornamental baubles. I purchased of them two shirts for my hunters; and at the same time they presented me with some arrows, and dried fish. This party consisted of five families, to the amount, as I suppose, of forty men, women, and children; but I did not see them all, as several were afraid to venture from their hiding-places. They are called *Deguthee Dinees*, or the *Quarrellers*.

Our guide, like his predecessors, now manifested his wish to leave us, and entertained similar apprehensions that we should not re-

turn by this passage. He had his alarms also respecting the Esquimaux, who might kill us and take away the women. Our Indians, however, assured him that we had no fears of any kind, and that he need not be alarmed for himself. They also convinced him that we should return by the way we were going, so that he consented to re-embark without giving us any further trouble; and eight small canoes followed us. Our courses this day were South-West by West six miles, South-West by South thirty miles, South-West three miles, West by South twelve miles, West by North two miles, and we encamped at eight in the evening on the Eastern bank of the river.

The Indians whom I found here, informed me, that from the place where I this morning met the first of their tribe, the distance over-land, on the East side, to the sea, was not long, and that from hence, by proceeding to the Westward, it was still shorter. They also represented the land on both sides as projecting to a point. These people do not appear to harbour any thievish dispositions; at least we did not perceive that they took, or wanted to take, anything from us by stealth or artifice. They enjoyed the amusements of dancing and jumping in common with those we had already seen; and, indeed, these exercises seem to be their favourite diversions.

About mid-day the weather was sultry, but in the afternoon it became cold. There was a large quantity of wild flax, the growth of the last year, laying on the ground, and the new plants were sprouting up through it. This circumstance I did not observe in any other part.

At four in the morning we embarked, at a small distance from the place of our encampment: the river, which here becomes narrower, flows between high rocks; and a meandering course took us North-West four miles. At this spot the banks became low; indeed, from the first rapid, the country does not wear a mountainous appearance; but the banks of the river are generally lofty, in some places perfectly naked, and in others well covered with small trees, such as the fir and the birch. We continued our last course for two miles, with mountains before us, whose tops were covered with snow.

The land is low on both sides of the river, except these mountains, whose base is distant about ten miles: here the river widens, and runs through various channels, formed by islands, some of which are without a tree, and little more than banks of mud and sand; while others are covered with a kind of spruce fir, and trees of a larger size than we had seen for the last ten days. Their banks, which are about six feet above the surface of

the water, display a face of solid ice, intermixed with veins of black earth, and as the heat of the sun melts the ice, the trees frequently fall into the river.

So various were the channels of the river at this time, that we were at a loss which to take. Our guide preferred the Easternmost, on account of the Esquimaux, but I determined to take the middle channel, as it appeared to be a larger body of water, and running North and South: besides, as there was a greater chance of seeing them I concluded, that we could always go to the Eastward, whenever we might prefer it. Our course was now West by North six miles, North-West by West, the snowy mountains being West by South from us, and stretching to the Northward as far as we could see. According to the information of the Indians, they are part of the chain of mountains which we approached on the third of this month. I obtained an observation this day that gave me 67. 47. North latitude, which was farther North than I expected, according to the course I kept: but the difference was owing to the variation of the compass, which was more Easterly than I imagined. From hence it was evident that these waters emptied themselves into the Hyperborean Sea; and though it was probable that, from the want of provision, we could not return to Atha-

basca in the course of the season, I nevertheless, determined to penetrate to the discharge of them.

My new conductor being very much discouraged and quite tired of his situation, used his influence to prevent our proceeding. He had never been, he said, at the *Benahullo Toe*, or White Man's Lake; and that when he went to the Esquimaux Lake, which is at no great distance, he passed over land from the place where we found him, and to that part where the Esquimaux pass the summer. In short, my hunters also became so disheartened from these accounts, and other circumstances, that I was confident they would have left me, if it had been in their power. I, however, satisfied them in some degree, by the assurance, that I would proceed onwards but seven days more, and if I did not then get to the sea, I would return. Indeed, the low state of our provisions, without any other consideration, formed a very sufficient security for the maintenance of my engagement. Our last course was thirty-two miles, with a stronger current than could be expected in such a low country.

We now proceeded North-North-West four miles, North-West three miles, North-East two miles, North-West by West three miles, and North-East two miles. At half past eight in the evening we landed and pitched

our tents, near to where there had been three encampments of the Esquimaux, since the breaking up of the ice. The natives, who followed us yesterday, left us at our station this morning. In the course of the day we saw large flocks of wild fowl.

Saturday, 11.—I sat up all night to observe the sun. At half past twelve I called up one of the men to view a spectacle which he had never before seen; when, on seeing the sun so high, he thought it was a signal to embark, and began to call the rest of his companions, who would scarcely be persuaded by me, that the sun had not descended nearer to the horizon, and that it was now but a short time past midnight.

We reposed, however, till three quarters after three, when we entered the canoe, and steered about North-West, the river taking a very serpentine course. About seven we saw a ridge of high land; at twelve we landed at a spot where we observed that some of the natives had lately been. I counted thirty places where there had been fires; and some of the men who went further, saw as many more. They must have been here for a considerable time, though it does not appear that they had erected any huts. A great number of poles, however, were seen fixed in the river, to which they had attached their nets, and there seemed to be an excellent fishery.

One of the fish, of the many which we saw leap out of the water, fell into our canoe; it was about ten inches long, and of a round shape. About the places where they had made their fires, were scattered pieces of whalebone, and thick burned leather, with parts of the frames of three canoes; we could also observe where they had spilled train oil; and there was the singular appearance of a spruce fir, stripped of its branches to the top like an English May-pole. The weather was cloudy, and the air cold and unpleasant. From this place for about five miles, the river widens, it then flows in a variety of narrow, meandering channels, amongst low islands, enlivened with no trees, but a few dwarf willows.

At four, we landed, where there were three houses, or rather huts, belonging to the natives. The ground-plot is of an oval form, about fifteen feet long, ten feet wide in the middle, and eight feet at either end; the whole of it is dug about twelve inches below the surface of the ground, and one half of it is covered over with willow branches; which probably serves as a bed for the whole family.

A space, in the middle of the other part, of about four feet wide, is deepened twelve inches more, and is the only spot in the house where a grown person can stand upright. One side of it is covered, as has been already

described, and the other is the hearth or fire-place, of which, however, they do not make much use. Though it was close to the wall, the latter did not appear to be burned. The door or entrance is in the middle of one end of the house, and is about two feet and an half high, and two feet wide, and has a covered way or porch five feet in length; so that it is absolutely necessary to creep on all fours in order to get into, or out of, this curious habitation. There is a hole of about eighteen inches square on the top of it, which serves the threefold purpose of a window, an occasional door, and a chimney. The underground part of the floor is lined with split wood. Six or eight stumps of small trees driven into the earth, with the root upwards, on which are laid some cross pieces of timber, support the roof of the building, which is an oblong square of ten feet by six. The whole is made of drift-wood covered with branches and dry-grass; over which is laid a foot deep of earth. On each side of these houses are a few square holes in the ground of about two feet in depth, which are covered with split wood and earth, except in the middle. These appeared to be contrived for the preservation of the winter stock of provisions. In and about the houses we found sledge runners and bones, pieces of whalebone, and poplar bark cut in circles, which are used as corks to buoy

the nets, and are fixed to them by pieces of whalebone. Before each hut a great number of stumps of trees were fixed in the ground, upon which it appeared that they hung their fish to dry.

We now continued our voyage, and encamped at eight o'clock. I calculated our course at about North-West, and, allowing for the windings, that we had made fifty-four miles. We expected, throughout the day, to meet with some of the natives. On several of the islands we perceived the print of their feet in the sand, as if they had been there but a few days before, to procure wild fowl. There were frequent showers of rain in the afternoon, and the weather was raw and disagreeable. We saw a black fox; but trees were now become very rare objects, except a few dwarf willows, of not more than three feet in height.

The discontents of our hunters were now renewed by the accounts which our guide had been giving of that part of our voyage that was approaching. According to his information, we were to see a larger lake on the morrow. Neither he nor his relations, he said, knew any thing about it, except that part which is opposite to, and not far from, their country. The Esquimaux alone, he added, inhabit its shores, and kill a large fish that is found in it, which is a principal part

of their food; this, we presumed, must be the whale. He also mentioned white bears, and another large animal which was seen in those parts, but our hunters could not understand the description which he gave of it. He also represented their canoes as being of a large construction, which would commodiously contain four or five families. However, to reconcile the English chief to the necessary continuance in my service, I presented him with one of my capotes or travelling coats; at the same time, to satisfy the guide, and keep him, if possible, in good humour, I gave him a skin of the moose-deer, which, in his opinion, was a valuable present.

Sunday, 12.—It rained with violence throughout the night, and till two in the morning; the weather continuing very cold. We proceeded on the same meandering course as yesterday, the wind North-North-West, and the country so naked that scarce a shrub was to be seen. At ten in the morning, we landed where there were four huts, exactly the same as those which have been so lately described. The adjacent land is high and covered with short grass and flowers, though the earth was not thawed above four inches from the surface; beneath which was a solid body of ice. This beautiful appearance, however, was strangely contrasted with the ice and snow that are seen in the valleys.

The soil, where there is any, is a yellow clay mixed with stones. These huts appear to have been inhabited during the last winter; and we had reason to think that some of the natives had been lately there, as the beach was covered with the track of their feet. Many of the runners and bars of their sledges were laid together, near the houses, in a manner that seemed to denote the return of the proprietors. There were also pieces of netting made of sinews, and some bark of the willow. The thread of the former was plaited, and no ordinary portion of time must have been employed in manufacturing so great a length of cord. A square stone-kettle, with a flat bottom, also occupied our attention, which was capable of containing two gallons; and we were puzzled as to the means these people must have employed to have chiselled it out of a solid rock into its present form. To these articles may be added, small pieces of flint fixed into handles of wood, which probably serve as knives; several wooden dishes; the stern and part of a large canoe; pieces of very thick leather, which we conjectured to be the covering of a canoe; several bones of large fish, and two heads; but we could not determine the animal to which they belonged, though we conjectured that it must be the sea-horse.

When we had satisfied our curiosity we re-

embarked, but we were at a loss what course to steer, as our guide seemed to be as ignorant of this country as ourselves. Though the current was very strong, we appeared to have come to the entrance of the lake. The stream set to the West, and we went with it to an high point, at the distance of about eight miles, which we conjectured to be an island; but, on approaching it, we perceived it to be connected with the shore by a low neck of land. I now took an observation which gave 69. 1. North latitude. From the point that has been just mentioned, we continued the same course for the Westernmost point of an high island, and the Westernmost land in sight, at the distance of fifteen miles.

The lake was quite open to us to the Westward, and out of the channel of the river there was not more than four feet water, and in some places the depth did not exceed one foot. From the shallowness of the water it was impossible to coast to the Westward. At five o'clock we arrived at the island, and during the last fifteen miles, five feet was the deepest water. The lake now appeared to be covered with ice, for about two leagues distance, and no land ahead, so that we were prevented from proceeding in this direction by the ice, and the shallowness of the water along the shore.

We landed at the boundary of our voyage

in this direction, and as soon as the tents were pitched I ordered the nets to be set, when I proceeded with the English chief to the highest part of the island, from which we discovered the solid ice, extending from the South-West by compass to the Eastward. As far as the eye could reach to the South-Westward, we could dimly perceive a chain of mountains, stretching further to the North than the edge of the ice, at the distance of upwards of twenty leagues. To the Eastward we saw many islands, and in our progress we met with a considerable number of white partridges, now become brown. There were also flocks of very beautiful plovers, and I found the nest of one of them with four eggs. White owls, likewise, were among the inhabitants of the place: but the dead, as well as the living, demanded our attention, for we came to the grave of one of the natives, by which lay a bow, a paddle, and a spear. The Indians informed me that they landed on a small island, about four leagues from hence, where they had seen the tracks of two men, that were quite fresh; they had also found a secret store of train oil, and several bones of white bears were scattered about the place where it was hid. The wind was now so high that it was impracticable for us to visit the nets.

My people could not, at this time, refrain

from expressions of real concern, that they were obliged to return without reaching the sea: indeed, the hope of attaining this object encouraged them to bear, without repining, the hardships of our unremitting voyage. For some time past their spirits were animated by the expectation that another day would bring them to the *Mer d'ouest:* and even in our present situation they declared their readiness to follow me wherever I should be pleased to lead them. We saw several large white gulls, and other birds, whose back, and upper feathers of the wing are brown; and whose belly, and under feathers of the wing are white.

CHAPTER V.

JULY, 1789.

Monday, 13.—We had no sooner retired to rest last night, if I may use that expression, in a country where the sun never sinks beneath the horizon, than some of the people were obliged to rise and remove the baggage, on account of the rising of the water. At eight in the morning the weather was fine and calm, which afforded an opportunity to examine the nets, one of which had been driven from its position by the wind and current. We caught seven poissons inconnus, which were unpalatable; a white fish, that proved delicious; and another about the size of an herring, which none of us had ever seen before, except the English chief, who recognised it as being of a kind that abounds in Hudson's Bay. About noon the wind blew hard from the Westward, when I took an observation, which gave 69. 14. North latitude, and the meridian variation of the compass was thirty-six degrees Eastward.*

This afternoon I re-ascended the hill, but could not discover that the ice had been put

* The longitude has since been discovered, by the dead reckoning, to be 135. West.

in motion by the force of the wind. At the same time I could just distinguish two small islands in the ice, to the North-West by compass. I now thought it necessary to give a new net to my men to mount, in order to obtain as much provision as possible from the water, our stores being reduced to about five hundred weight, which, without any other supply, would not have sufficed for fifteen people above twelve days. One of the young Indians, however, was so fortunate as to find the net that had been missing, and which contained three of the poissons inconnus.

Tuesday, 14.—It blew very hard from the North-West since the preceding evening. Having sat up till three in the morning, I slept longer than usual; but about eight one of my men saw a great many animals in the water, which he at first supposed to be pieces of ice. About nine, however, I was awakened to resolve the doubts which had taken place respecting this extraordinary appearance. I immediately perceived that they were whales; and having ordered the canoe to be prepared, we embarked in pursuit of them. It was, indeed, a very wild and unreflecting enterprise, and it was a very fortunate circumstance that we failed in our attempt to overtake them, as a stroke from the tail of one of these enormous fish would have dashed the canoe to pieces. We may, perhaps, have been in-

debted to the foggy weather for our safety, as it prevented us from continuing our pursuit. Our guide informed us that they are the same kind of fish which are the principal food of the Esquimaux, and they were frequently seen as large as our canoe. The part of them which appeared above the water was altogether white, and they were much larger than the largest porpoise.

About twelve the fog dispersed, and being curious to take a view of the ice, I gave orders for the canoe to be got in readiness. We accordingly embarked, and the Indians followed us. We had not, however, been an hour on the water, when the wind rose on a sudden from the North-East, and obliged us to tack about, and the return of the fog prevented us from ascertaining our distance from the ice; indeed, from this circumstance, the island which we had so lately left was but dimly seen. Though the wind was close, we ventured to hoist the sail, and from the violence of the swell it was by great exertions that two men could bale out the water from our canoe. We were in a state of actual danger, and felt every corresponding emotion of pleasure when we reached the land. The Indians had fortunately got more to windward, so that the swell in some measure drove them on shore, though their canoes were nearly filled with water; and had they been

laden, we should have seen them no more. As I did not propose to satisfy my curiosity at the risk of similar dangers, we continued our course along the islands, which screened us from the wind. I was now determined to take a more particular examination of the islands, in the hope of meeting with parties of the natives, from whom I might be able to obtain some interesting intelligence, though our conductor discouraged my expectations, by representing them as very shy and inaccessible people. At the same time he informed me, that we should probably find some of them, if we navigated the channel which he had originally recommended us to enter.

At eight we encamped on the Eastern end of the island, which I had named the Whale Island. It is about seven leagues in length, East and West by compass; but not more than half a mile in breadth. We saw several red foxes, one of which was killed. There were also five or six very old huts on the point where we had taken our station. The nets were now set, and one of them in five fathom water, the current setting North-East by compass. This morning I ordered a post to be erected close to our tents, on which I engraved the latitude of the place, my own name, the number of persons which I had with me, and the time we remained there.

Wednesday, 15.—Being awakened by some casual circumstance, at four this morning, I was surprised on perceiving that the water had flowed under our baggage. As the wind had not changed, and did not blow with greater violence than when we went to rest, we were all of opinion that this circumstance proceeded from the tide. We had, indeed, observed at the other end of the island, that the water rose and fell; but we then imagined that it must have been occasioned by the wind. The water continued to rise till about six, but I could not ascertain the time with the requisite precision, as the wind then began to blow with great violence; I therefore determined, at all events, to remain here till the next morning, though, as it happened, the state of the wind was such, as to render my stay here an act of necessity. Our nets were not very successful, as they presented us with only eight fish. From an observation which I obtained at noon we were in 69. 7. North latitude. As the evening approached, the wind increased, and the weather became cold. Two swans were the only provision which the hunters procured for us.

Thursday, 16.—The rain did not cease till seven this morning, the weather being at intervals very cold and unpleasant. Such was its inconstancy, that I could not make an

accurate observation; but the tide appeared to rise sixteen or eighteen inches.

We now embarked, and steered under sail among the islands, where I hoped to meet with some of the natives, but my expectation was not gratified. Our guide imagined that they were gone to their distant haunts, where they fish for whales and hunt the rein-deer, that are opposite to his country. His relations, he said, see them every year, but he did not encourage us to expect that we should find any of them, unless it were at a small river that falls into the great one, from the Eastward, at a considerable distance from our immediate situation. We accordingly made for the river, and stemmed the current. At two in the afternoon the water was quite shallow in every part of our course, and we could always find the bottom with the paddle. At seven we landed, encamped, and set the nets. Here the Indians killed two geese, two cranes, and a white owl. Since we entered the river, we experienced a very agreeable change in the temperature of the air; but this pleasant circumstance was not without its inconvenience, as it subjected us to the persecution of the mosquitoes.

Friday, 17.—On taking up the nets, they were found to contain but six fish. We embarked at four in the morning, and passed four encampments; which appeared to have

been very lately inhabited. We then landed upon a small round island, close to the Eastern shore, which possessed somewhat of a sacred character, as the top of it seemed to be a place of sepulture, from the numerous graves which we observed there. We found the frame of a small canoe, with various dishes, troughs, and other utensils, which had been the living property of those who could now use them no more, and form the ordinary accompaniments of their last abodes. As no part of the skins that must have covered the canoe was remaining, we concluded that it had been eaten by wild animals that inhabit, or occasionally frequent, the island. The frame of the canoe, which was entire, was put together with whale-bone; it was sewed in some parts, and tied in others. The sledges were from four to eight feet long; the length of the bars was upwards of two feet; the runners were two inches thick and nine inches deep; the prow was two feet and an half high, and formed of two pieces, sewed with whalebone, to three other thin spars of wood, which were of the same height; and fixed in the runners by means of mortises, were sewed two thin broad bars lengthways, at a small distance from each other; these frames were fixed together with three or four cross bars, tied fast upon the runners, and on the lower edge of the latter, small pieces of

horn were fastened by wooden pegs, that they might slide with greater facility. They are drawn by shafts, which I imagine are applied to any particular sledge as they are wanted as I saw no more than one pair of them.

About half past one we came opposite to the first spruce-tree that we had seen for some time: there are but very few of them on the main land, and they are very small: those are larger which are found on the islands, where they grow in patches, and close together. It is, indeed, very extraordinary that there should be any wood whatever in a country where the ground never thaws above five inches from the surface. We landed at seven in the evening. The weather was now very pleasant, and in the course of the day we saw great numbers of wild fowl, with their young ones, but they were so shy that we could not approach them. The Indians were not very successful in their foraging party, as they killed only two grey cranes, and a grey goose. Two of them were employed on the high land to the Eastward, through the greater part of the day, in search of rein-deer, but they could discover nothing more than a few tracks of that animal. I also ascended the high land, from whence I had a delightful view of the river, divided into innumerable streams, meandering through islands, some of which were covered with

wood, and others with grass. The mountains, that formed the opposite horizon, were at the distance of forty miles. The inland view was neither so extensive nor agreeable, being terminated by a near range of bleak, barren hills, between which are small lakes or ponds, while the surrounding country is covered with tufts of moss, without the shade of a single tree. Along the hills is a kind of fence, made with branches, where the natives had set snares to catch white partridges.

Saturday, 18.—The nets did not produce a single fish, and at three o'clock in the morning we took our departure. The weather was fine and clear, and we passed several encampments. As the prints of human feet were very fresh in the sand, it could not have been long since the natives had visited the spot. We now proceeded in the hope of meeting with some of them at the river, whither our guide was conducting us with that expectation. We observed a great number of trees, in different places, whose branches had been lopped off to the tops. They denote the immediate abode of the natives, and probably serve for signals to direct each other to their respective winter-quarters. Our hunters, in the course of the day, killed two rein-deer, which were the only large animals that we had seen since we had been in this river, and proved a very seasonable sup-

ply, as our pemmican had become mouldy for some time past; though in that situation we were under the necessity of eating it.

In the valleys and low lands near the river, cranberries are found in great abundance, particularly in favourable aspects. It is a singular circumstance, that the fruit of two succeeding years may be gathered at the same time, from the same shrub. Here was also another berry, of a very pale yellow colour, that resembles a raspberry, and is of a very agreeable flavour. There is a great variety of other plants and herbs, whose names and properties are unknown to me.

The weather became cold towards the afternoon, with the appearance of rain, and we landed for the night at seven in the evening. The Indians killed eight geese. During the greater part of the day I walked with the English chief, and found it very disagreeable and fatiguing. Though the country is so elevated, it was one continual morass, except on the summits of some barren hills. As I carried my hanger in my hand, I frequently examined if any part of the ground was in a state of thaw, but could never force the blade into it, beyond the depth of six or eight inches. The face of the high land, towards the river, is in some places rocky, and in others a mixture of sand and stone, veined

with a kind of red earth, with which the natives bedaub themselves.

Sunday, 19.—It rained, and blew hard from the North, till eight in the morning, when we discovered that our conductor had escaped. I was, indeed, surprised at his honesty, as he left the moose-skin which I had given him for a covering, and went off in his shirt, though the weather was very cold. I inquired of the Indians if they had given him any cause of offence, or had observed any recent disposition in him to desert us, but they assured me that they had not in any instance displeased him: at the same time they recollected that he had expressed his apprehensions of being taken away as a slave; and his alarms were probably increased on the preceding day, when he saw them kill the two rein-deer with so much readiness. In the afternoon the weather became fine and clear, when we saw large flights of geese with their young ones, and the hunters killed twenty-two of them. As they had at this time cast their feathers, they could not fly. They were of a small kind, and much inferior in size to those that frequent the vicinity of Athabasca. At eight, we took our station near an Indian encampment, and, as we had observed in similar situations, pieces of bone, rein-deer's horn, &c., were scattered about it. It also appeared, that the natives had been employed

here in working wood into arms, utensils, &c.

Monday, 20.—We embarked at three this morning, when the weather was cloudy, with small rain and aft wind. About twelve the rain became so violent as to compel us to encamp at two in the afternoon. We saw great numbers of fowl, and killed among us fifteen geese and four swans. Had the weather been more favourable, we should have added considerably to our booty. We now passed the river, where we expected to meet some of the natives, but discovered no signs of them. The ground close to the river does not rise to any considerable height, and the hills, which are at a small distance, are covered with the spruce fir and small birch trees, to their very summits.

Tuesday, 21.—We embarked at half past one this morning, when the weather was cold and unpleasant, and the wind South-West. At ten, we left the channels formed by the islands for the uninterrupted channel of the river, where we found the current so strong, that it was absolutely necessary to tow the canoe with a line. The land on both sides was elevated, and almost perpendicular, and the shore beneath it, which is of no great breadth, was covered with a grey stone that falls from the precipice. We made much greater expedition with the line, than we

could have done with the paddles. The men in the canoe relieved two of those on shore every two hours, so that it was very hard and fatiguing duty, but it saved a great deal of that time which was so precious to us. At half past eight we landed at the same spot where we had already encamped on the ninth instant.

In about an hour after our arrival, we were joined by eleven of the natives, who were stationed farther up the river, and there were some among them whom we had not seen during our former visit to this place. The brother of our late guide, however, was of the party, and was eager in his inquiries after him; but our account did not prove satisfactory. They all gave evident tokens of their suspicion, and each of them made a distinct harangue on the occasion. Our Indians, indeed, did not understand their eloquence, though they conjectured it to be very unfavourable to our assertions. The brother, nevertheless, proposed to barter his credulity for a small quantity of beads, and promised to believe every thing I should say, if I would gratify him with a few of those baubles; but he did not succeed in his proposition, and I contented myself with giving him the bow and arrows which our conductor had left with us.

My people were now necessarily engaged

in putting the fire-arms in order, after the violent rain of the preceding day; an employment which very much attracted the curiosity, and appeared in some degree, to awaken the apprehensions of the natives. To their inquiries concerning the motives of our preparation, we answered by showing a piece of meat and a goose, and informing them, that we were preparing our arms to procure similar provisions: at the same time we assured them, though it was our intention to kill any animals we might find, there was no intention to hurt or injure them. They, however, entreated us not to discharge our pieces in their presence. I requested the English chief to ask them some questions, which they either did not or would not understand; so that I failed in obtaining any information from them.

All my people went to rest; but I thought it prudent to sit up, in order to watch the motions of the natives. This circumstance was a subject of their inquiry; and their curiosity was still more excited, when they saw me employed in writing. About twelve o'clock I perceived four of their women coming along the shore; and they were no sooner seen by their friends, than they ran hastily to meet them, and persuaded two of them, who, I suppose, were young, to return, while they brought the other two, who were very

old, to enjoy the warmth of our fire; but, after staying there for about half an hour, they also retreated. Those who remained, immediately kindled a small fire, and laid themselves down to sleep round it, like so many whelps, having neither skins or garments of any kind to cover them, notwithstanding the cold that prevailed. My people having placed their kettle of meat on the fire, I was obliged to guard it from the natives, who made several attempts to possess themselves of its contents; and this was the only instance I had hitherto discovered, of their being influenced by a pilfering disposition. It might, perhaps, be a general opinion, that provisions were a common property. I now saw the sun set for the first time since I had been here before. During the preceding night, the weather was so cloudy, that I could not observe its descent to the horizon. The water had sunk, at this place, upward of three feet since we had passed down the river.

Wednesday, 22.—We began our march at half past three this morning, the men being employed to tow the canoe. I walked with the Indians to their huts, which were at a greater distance than I had any reason to expect, for it occupied three hours in hard walking to reach them. We passed a narrow, and deep river in our way, at the mouth of which the natives had set their nets. They had hid

their effects, and sent their young women into the woods, as we saw but very few of the former, and none of the latter. They had large huts built with drift-wood on the declivity of the beach and in the inside the earth was dug away, so as to form a level floor. At each end was a stout fork, whereon was laid a strong ridge-pole, which formed a support to the whole structure, and a covering of spruce bark preserved it from the rain. Various spars of different heights were fixed within the hut, and covered with split fish that hung on them to dry; and fires were made in different parts to accelerate the operation. There were rails also on the outside of the building, which were hung around with fish, but in a fresher state than those within. The spawn is also carefully preserved and dried in the same manner. We obtained as many fish from them as the canoe could conveniently contain, and some strings of beads were the price paid for them, an article which they preferred to every other. Iron they held in little or no estimation.

During the two hours that I remained here, I employed the English chief in a continual state of inquiry concerning these people. The information that resulted from this conference was as follows:

This nation or tribe is very numerous, with whom the Esquimaux had been continually

at variance, a people who take every advantage of attacking those who are not in a state to defend themselves; and though they had promised friendship, had lately, and in the most treacherous manner, butchered some of their people. As a proof of this circumstance, the relations of the deceased showed us, that they had cut off their hair on the occasion. They also declared their determination to withdraw all confidence in future from the Esquimaux, and to collect themselves in a formidable body, that they might be enabled to revenge the death of their friends.

From their account, a strong party of Esquimaux occasionally ascends this river, in large canoes, in search of flint stones, which they employ to point their spears and arrows. They were now at their lake due East from the spot where we then were, which was at no great distance over land, where they kill the rein-deer, and that they would soon begin to catch big fish for the winter stock. We could not, however, obtain any information respecting the lake in the direction in which we were. To the Eastward and Westward where they saw it, the ice breaks up, but soon freezes again.

The Esquimaux informed them that they saw large canoes full of white men to the Westward, eight or ten winters ago, from whom they obtained iron in exchange for

leather. The lake where they met these canoes, is called by them *Belhoullay Toc*, or White Man's Lake. They also represented the Esquimaux as dressing like themselves. They wear their hair short, and have two holes perforated, one on each side of the mouth, in a line with the under lip, in which they place long beads that they find in the lake. Their bows are somewhat different from those used by the natives we had seen, and they employ slings from whence they throw stones with such dexterity that they prove very formidable weapons in the day of battle.

We also learned in addition from the natives, that we should not see any more of their relations, as they had all left the river to go in pursuit of rein-deer for their provisions, and that they themselves should engage in a similar expedition in a few days. Rein-deer, bears, wolverines, martens, foxes, hares, and white buffaloes are the only quadrupeds in their country; and that the latter were only to be found in the mountains to the Westward.

We proceeded with the line throughout the day, except two hours, when we employed the sail. We encamped at eight in the evening. From the place we quitted this morning, the banks of the river are well covered with small wood, spruce, firs, birch, and wil-

low. We found it very warm during the whole of our progress.

Thursday, 23.—At five in the morning we proceeded on our voyage, but found it very difficult to travel along the beach. We observed several places where the natives had stationed themselves and set their nets since our passage downwards. We passed a small river, and at five o'clock our Indians put to shore in order to encamp, but we proceeded onwards, which displeased them very much, from the fatigue they suffered, and at eight we encamped at our position of the 8th instant. The day was very fine, and we employed the towing line throughout the course of it. At ten, our hunters returned, sullen and dissatisfied. We had not touched any of our provision stores for six days, in which time we had consumed two rein-deer, four swans, forty-five geese, and a considerable quantity of fish: but it is to be considered, that we were ten men, and four women. I have always observed, that the north men possessed very hearty appetites, but they were very much exceeded by those with me, since we entered this river. I should really have thought it absolute gluttony in my people, if my own appetite had not increased in a similar proportion.

CHAPTER VI.

JULY, 1789.

Friday, 24.—At five we continued our course, but, in a very short time, were under the necessity of applying to the aid of the line, the stream being so strong as to render all our attempts unavailing to stem it with the paddles. We passed a small river, on each side of which the natives and Esquimaux collect flint. The bank is an high, steep, and soft rock, variegated with red, green, and yellow hues. From the continual dripping of water, parts of it frequently fall and break into small stony flakes like slate, but not so hard. Among them are found pieces of *Petrolium*, which bears a resemblance to yellow wax, but is more friable. The English chief informed me that rocks of a similar kind are scattered about the country at the back of the Slave Lake, where the Chepewyans collect copper.

At ten, we had an aft wind, and the men who had been engaged in towing, re-embarked. At twelve, we observed a lodge on the side of the river, and its inhabitants running about in great confusion, or hurrying to the woods. Three men waited our arrival,

though they remained at some distance from us, with their bows and arrows ready to be employed; or at least, that appeared to be the idea they wished to convey to us, by continually snapping the strings of the former, and the signs they made to forbid our approach. The English chief, whose language they, in some degree understood, endeavoured to remove their distrust of us; but till I went to them with a present of beads, they refused to have any communication with us.

When they first perceived our sail, they took us for the Esquimaux Indians, who employ a sail in their canoes. They were suspicious of our designs, and questioned us with a view to obtain some knowledge of them. On seeing us in possession of some of the clothes, bows, etc., which must have belonged to some of the Deguthee Denees, or Quarrellers, they imagined that we had killed some of them, and were bearing away the fruits of our victory. They appeared, indeed, to be of the same tribe, though they were afraid of acknowledging it. From their questicns, it was evident that they had not received any notice of our being in those parts.

They would not acknowledge that they had any women with them, though we had seen them running to the woods; but pretended that they had been left at a considerable dis-

tance from the river, with some relations, who were engaged in killing rein-deer. These people had been here but a short time, and their lodge was not yet completed; nor had they any fish in a state of preparation for their provision. I gave them a knife and some beads for an horn-wedge or chisel, with which they split their canoe-wood. One of my Indians having broken his paddle, attempted to take one of theirs, which was immediately contested by its owner, and on my interfering to prevent this act of injustice, he manifested his gratitude to me on the occasion. We lost an hour and a half in this conference.

The English chief was during the whole of the time in the woods, where some of the hidden property was discovered, but the women contrived to elude the search that was made after them. Some of these articles were purloined, but I was ignorant of this circumstance till we had taken our departure, or I should have given an ample remuneration. Our chief expressed his displeasure at their running away to conceal themselves, their property, and their young women, in very bitter terms. He said his heart was against those slaves; and complained aloud of his disappointment in coming so far without seeing the natives, and getting something from them.

We employed the sail and the paddle since ten this morning, and pitched our tents at seven in the evening. We had no sooner encamped than we were visited by an Indian whom we had seen before, and whose family was at a small distance up the river: at nine he left us. The weather was clear and serene.

Saturday, 25.—We embarked this morning at a quarter past three, and at seven we passed the lodge of the Indian who had visited us the preceding evening. There appeared to have been more than one family, and we naturally concluded that our visitor had made such an unfavourable report of us, as to induce his companions to fly on our approach. Their fire was not extinguished, and they had left a considerable quantity of fish scattered about their dwelling.

The weather was now very sultry; but the current had relaxed of its force, so that the paddle was sufficient for our progress during the greatest part of the day. The inland part of the country is mountainous and the banks of the river low, but covered with wood, among which is the poplar, but of small growth, and the first which we had seen on our return. A pigeon also flew by us, and hares appeared to be in great plenty. We passed many Indian encampments which we did not see in our passage down the river.

About seven the sky, to the Westward, became of a steel blue colour, with lightning and thunder. We accordingly landed to prepare ourselves against the coming storm; but before we could erect our tents, it came on with such violence that we expected it to carry every thing before it. The ridge pole of my tent was broken in the middle, where it was sound, and nine inches and an half in circumference; and we were obliged to throw ourselves flat on the ground to escape being wounded by the stones that were hurled about in the air like sand. The violence of the storm, however, subsided in a short time, but left the sky overcast with the appearance of rain.

Sunday, 26.—It rained from the preceding evening to this morning, when we embarked at four o'clock. At eight we landed at three large Indian lodges. Their inhabitants, who were asleep, expressed uncommon alarm and agitation when they were awakened by us, though most of them had seen us before. Their habitations were crowded with fish, hanging to dry in every part; but as we wanted some for present use, we sent their young men to visit the nets, and they returned with abundance of large white fish, to which the name has been given of *poisson inconnu*; some of a round shape, and green colour; and a few white ones; all which were

very agreeable food. Some beads, and a few other trifles, were gratefully received in return. These people are very fond of iron work of any kind, and my men purchased several of their articles for small pieces of tin.

There were five or six persons whom we had not seen before; and among them was a Dog-rib Indian, whom some private quarrel had driven from his country. The English chief understood him as well as one of his own nation, and gave the following account of their conversation:—

He had been informed by the people with whom he now lives, the Hare Indians, that there is another river on the other side of the mountains to the South-West, which falls into the *Belhoullay Teo*, or White-man's Lake, in comparison of which that on whose banks we then were, was but a small stream; that the natives were very large, and very wicked, and kill common men with their eyes; that they make canoes larger than ours; that those who inhabit the entrance of it kill a kind of beaver, the skin of which is almost red; and that large canoes often frequent it. As there is no known communication by water with this river, the natives who saw it went over the mountains.

As he mentioned that there were some beavers in this part of the country, I told him

to hunt it, and desire the others to do the same, as well as the martens, foxes, beaver-eater or wolverine, &c., which they might carry to barter for iron with his own nation, who are supplied with goods by us, near their country. He was anxious to know whether we should return that way; at the same time he informed us, that we should see but few of the natives along the river, as all the young men were engaged in killing rein-deer, near the Esquimaux Lake, which, he also said, was at no great distance. The latter he represented as very treacherous, and added, that they had killed one of his people. He told us likewise, that some plan of revenge was meditating, unless the offending party paid a sufficient price for the body of the murdered person.

My Indians were very anxious to possess themselves of a woman that was with the natives, but as they were not willing to part with her, I interfered, to prevent her being taken by force; indeed, I was obliged to exercise the utmost vigilance, as the Indians who accompanied me were ever ready to take what they could from the natives, without making them any return. About twelve, we passed a river of some appearance, flowing from the Eastward. One of the natives who followed us, called it the Winter Road River. We did not find the stream strong to-day

along the shore, as there were many eddy currents; we therefore employed the sail during some hours of it, and went on shore for the night at half past seven.

Monday, 27.—The weather was now fine, and we renewed our voyage at half past two. At seven we landed where there were three families, situated close to the rapids. We found but few people; for as the Indian who followed us yesterday had arrived here before us, we supposed that the greater part had fled, on the intelligence which he gave of our approach. Some of these people we had seen before, when they told us that they had left their property at a lake in the neighbourhood, and had promised to fetch it before our return; but we now found them as unprovided as when we left them. They had plenty of fish, some of which was packed up in birch bark.

During the time we remained with them, which was not more than two hours, I endeavoured to obtain some additional intelligence respecting the river which had been mentioned on the preceding day; when they declared their total ignorance of it, but from the reports of others, as they had never been beyond the mountains, on the opposite side of their own river; they had, however, been informed that it was larger than that which washed the banks whereon they lived, and

that its course was towards the mid-day sun. They added, that there were people at a small distance up the river, who inhabited the opposite mountains, and had lately descended from them to obtain supplies of fish. These people, they suggested, must be well acquainted with the other river, which was the object of my inquiry. I engaged one of them, by a bribe of some beads, to describe the circumjacent country upon the sand. This singular map he immediately undertook to delineate, and accordingly traced out a very long point of land between the rivers, though without paying the least attention to their courses, which he represented as running into the great lake, at the extremity of which, as he had been told by Indians of other nations, there was a Belhoullay Couin, or White Man's Fort. This I took to be Unalascha Fort, and consequently the river to the West to be Cook's River; and that the body of water or sea into which this river discharges itself at Whale Island, communicates with Norton Sound. I made an advantageous proposition to this man to accompany me across the mountains to the other river, but he refused it. At the same time he recommended me to the people already mentioned, who were fishing in the neighbourhood, as better qualified to assist me in the undertaking which I had proposed.

One of this small company of natives was greviously afflicted with ulcers in his back, and the only attention which was paid to his miserable condition, as far at least as we could discover, proceeded from a woman, who carefully employed a bunch of feathers in preventing the flies from settling upon his sores.

At ten this morning we landed near the lodges which had already been mentioned to us, and I ordered my people to make preparation for passing the remaining part of the day here, in order to obtain that familiarity with the natives which might induce them to afford me, without reserve, the information that I should require from them. This object, however, was in danger of being altogether frustrated, by a misunderstanding that had taken place between the natives and my young Indians, who had already arrived there. Before the latter could disembark, the former seized the canoe, and dragged it on shore, and in this act of violence the boat was broken, from the weight of the persons in it. This insult was on the point of being seriously revenged, when I arrived, to prevent the consequences of such a disposition. The variation of the compass was about twenty-nine degrees to the East.

At four in the afternoon I ordered my interpreter to harangue the natives, assembled

in council; but his long discourse obtained little satisfactory intelligence from them. Their account of the river to the Westward, was similar to that which he had already received: and their description of the inhabitants of that country was still more absurd and ridiculous. They represented them as being of a gigantic stature, and adorned with wings; which, however, they never employed in flying. That they fed on large birds, which they killed with the greatest ease, though common men would be certain victims of their ferocity if they ventured to approach them. They also described the people that inhabited the mouth of the river as possessing the extraordinary power of killing with their eyes, and devouring a large beaver at a single meal. They added that canoes of very large dimensions visited that place. They did not, however, relate these strange circumstances from their own knowledge, but on the reports of other tribes, as they themselves never ventured to proceed beyond the first mountains, where they went in search of the small white buffaloes, as the inhabitants of the other side endeavour to kill them whenever they meet. They likewise mentioned that the sources of those streams which are tributary to both the great rivers are separated by the mountains. It appeared to us, however, that these people knew more about the country than they chose

to communicate, or at least reached me, as the interpreter, who had long been tired of the voyage, might conceal such a part of their communications as, in his opinion, would induce me to follow new routes, or extend my excursions.

No sooner was the conference concluded, than they began to dance, which is their favourite, and, except jumping, their only amusement. In this pastime old and young, male and female, continued their exertions, till their strength was exhausted. This exercise was accompanied by loud imitations of the various noises produced by the rein-deer, the bear, and the wolf.

When they had finished their antics, I desired the English chief to renew the former subjects; which he did without success. I therefore assumed an angry air, expressed my suspicions that they withheld their information, and concluded with a menace, that if they did not give me all the satisfaction in their power, I would force one of them along with me to-morrow, to point out the other river. On this declaration, they all, at one and the same moment, became sick, and answered in a very faint tone, that they knew no more than they had already communicated, and that they should die if I took any of them away. They began to persuade my interpeter to remain with them, as they loved

him as well as they did themselves, and that he would be killed if he continued with me. Nor did this proposition, aided as it was by the solicitation of his women, fail of producing a considerable effect upon him, though he endeavoured to conceal it from me.

I now found that it would be fruitless for me to expect any accounts of the country, or the other great river, till I got to the river of the Bear Lake, where I expected to find some of the natives who promised to wait for us there. These people had actually mentioned this river to me when we passed them, but I then paid no attention to that circumstance, as I imagined it to be either a misunderstanding of my interpreter, or that it was an invention which, with their other lies, might tend to prevent me from proceeding down their river.

We were plentifully supplied with fish, as well dry as fresh, by these people; they also gathered as many whortle berries as we chose, for which we paid with the usual articles of beads, awls, knives, and tin. I purchased a few beaver-skins of them, which, according to their accounts, are not very numerous in this country; and that they do not abound in moose-deer and buffaloes. They were alarmed for some of their young men, who were killing geese higher up the river, and entreated us to do them no harm. About sunset I

was under the necessity of shooting one of their dogs, as we could not keep those animals from our baggage. It was in vain that I had remonstrated on this subject, so that I was obliged to commit the act which has been just mentioned. When these people heard the report of the pistol, and saw the dog dead, they were seized with a very general alarm, and the women took their children on their backs and ran into the woods. I ordered the cause of this act of severity to be explained, with the assurance that no injury would be offered to themselves. The woman, however, to whom the dog belonged, was very much affected, and declared that the loss of five children, during the preceding winter, had not affected her so much as the death of this animal. But her grief was not of very long duration; and a few beads, &c., soon assuaged her sorrow. But as they can without difficulty get rid of their affliction, they can with equal ease assume it, and feign sickness if it be necessary with the same versatility. When we arrived this morning, we found the women in tears, from an apprehension that we were come to take them away. To the eye of an European they certainly were objects of disgust; but there were those among my party who observed some hidden charms in these females which rendered them objects of desire, and means were found, I believe,

that very soon dissipated their alarms and subdued their coyness.

On the upper part of the beach, liquorice grew in great abundance and it was now in blossom. I pulled up some of the roots, which were large and long; but the natives were ignorant of its qualities, and considered it as a weed of no use or value.

Tuesday, 28.—At four this morning I ordered my people to prepare for our departure; and while they were loading the canoe, I went with the English chief to visit the lodges, but the greater part of their inhabitants had quitted them during the night, and those that remained pretended sickness and refused to rise. When, however, they were convinced that we did not mean to take any of them with us, their sickness abandoned them, and when we had embarked, they came forth from their huts, to desire that we would visit their nets, which were at a small distance up the river, and take all the fish we might find in them. We accordingly availed ourselves of this permission, and took as many as were necessary for our own supply.

We landed shortly after where there were two more lodges, which were full of fish, but without any inhabitants, who were probably with the natives whom we had just left. My Indians, in rummaging these places, found several articles which they proposed to take;

I therefore gave beads and awls to be left as the purchase of them; but this act of justice they were not able to comprehend, as the people themselves were not present. I took up a net and left a large knife in the place of it. It was about four fathoms long, and thirty-two meshes in depth; these nets are much more convenient to set in the eddy current than our long ones. This is the place that the Indians call a rapid, though we went up it all the way with the paddle; so that the current could not be so strong here, as in many other parts of the river; indeed, if it were so, the difficulty of towing would be almost insuperable, as in many parts, the rocks, which are of a great height, and rather project over the water, leave no shore between them and the stream. These precipices abound in swallows' nests. The weather was now very sultry, and at eleven we were under the necessity of landing to gum our canoe.

In about an hour we set forward, and at one in the afternoon, went on shore at a fire, which we supposed to have been kindled by the young men, who, as we had been already informed, were hunting geese. Our hunters found their canoe and the fowl they had got, secreted in the woods; and soon after, the people themselves, whom they brought to the water side. Out of two hundred geese, we picked thirty-six which were eatable; the

rest were putrid, and emitted a horrid stench. They had been killed some time without having been gutted, and in this state of loathsome rottenness, we have every reason to suppose they are eaten by the natives. We paid for those which we had taken, and departed. At seven in the evening, the weather became cloudy and overcast; at eight we encamped; at nine it began to thunder with great violence; a heavy rain succeeded, accompanied with a hurricane, that blew down our tents, and threatened to carry away the canoe, which had been fastened to some trees with a cod-line. The storm lasted two hours, and deluged us with wet.

Wednesday, 29.—Yesterday the weather was cloudy, and the heat insupportable; and now we could not put on clothes enough to keep us warm. We embarked at a quarter past four with an aft wind, which drove us on at a great rate, though the current is very strong. At ten we came to the other rapid, which we got up with the line on the West side, where we found it much stronger than when we went down; the water had also fallen at least five feet since that time, so that several shoals appeared in the river which we had not seen before. One of my hunters narrowly escaped being drowned in crossing a river that falls in from the Westward, and is the most considerable, except the mountain

river, that flows in this direction. We had strong Northerly and cold wind throughout the whole of the day, and took our station for the night at a quarter past eight. We killed a goose and caught some young ones.

Thursday, 30.—We renewed our voyage at four this morning, after a very rainy night. The weather was cloudy, but the cold had moderated, and the wind was North-West. We were enabled to employ the sail during part of the day, and encamped at about seven in the evening. We killed eleven old geese and forty young ones which had just begun to fly. The English chief was very much irritated against one of his young men: that jealousy occasioned this uneasiness, and that it was not without very sufficient cause, was all I could discover. For the last two or three days we had eaten the liquorice root, of which there is a great abundance on the banks of the river. We found it a powerful astringent.

Friday, 31. — The rain was continual throughout the night, and did not subside till nine this morning, when we renewed our progress. The wind and weather the same as yesterday. About three in the afternoon it cleared up and the wind died away, when it became warm. At five the wind veered to the East, and brought cold along with it. There were plenty of whortle berries, raspber-

ries, and a berry called *poire*, which grows in the greatest abundance. We were very much impeded in our way by shoals of sand and small stones which render the water shallow at a distance from the shore. In other places the bank of the river is lofty: it is formed of black earth and sand, and, as it is continually falling, displayed to us, in some parts, a face of solid ice, to within a foot of the surface. We finished this day's voyage at a quarter before eight, and in the course of it killed seven geese.

We now had recourse to our corn, for we had only consumed three days of our original provision since we began to mount the current. It was my intention to have ascended the river on the South side from the last rapid, to discover if there were any rivers of consequence that flow from the Westward; but the sand-banks were so numerous and the current so strong, that I was compelled to traverse to the opposite side, where the eddy currents are very frequent, which gave us an opportunity of setting our nets and making much more headway.

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CHAPTER VII.

AUGUST, 1789.

Saturday, 1.—We embarked at three this morning, the weather being clear and cold, with the wind at South-East. At three in the afternoon we traversed and landed to take the canoe in tow: here was an encampment of the natives, which we had reason to suppose they had quitted the preceding day. At five we perceived a family, consisting of a man, two women, and as many children, stationed by the side of the water, whom we had not seen before. They informed us, that they had but few fish, and that none of their friends were in the neighbourhood, except the inhabitants of one lodge on the other side of the river, and a man who belonged to them, and who was now occupied in hunting. I now found my interpreter very unwilling to ask such questions as were dictated to him, from the apprehension, as I imagined, that I might obtain such intelligence as would prevent him from seeing Athabasca this season. We left him with the Indian, and pitched our tents at the same place where we had passed the night on the fifth of last month. The English chief came along with the Indian

to our fire; and the latter informed us that the native who went down part of the river with us had passed there, and that we should meet with three lodges of his tribe above the river of the Bear Lake. Of the river to the Westward he knew nothing, but from the relation of others. This was the first night since our departure from Athabasca, when it was sufficiently dark to render the stars visible.

Sunday, 2.—We set off at three this morning with the towing-line. I walked with my Indians, as they went faster than the canoe, and particularly as I suspected that they wanted to arrive at the huts of the natives before me. In our way, I observed several small springs of mineral water running from the foot of the mountain, and along the beach I saw several lumps of iron ore. When we came to the river of the Bear Lake, I ordered one of the young Indians to wait for my canoe, and I took my place in their small canoe. This river is about two hundred and fifty yards broad at this place, the water clear and of a greenish colour. When I landed on the opposite shore, I discovered that the natives had been there very lately from the print of their feet in the sand. We continued walking till five in the afternoon, when we saw several smokes along the shore. As we naturally concluded, that these were

certain indications where we should meet the natives who were the objects of our search we quickened our pace; but, in our progress, experienced a very sulphurous smell, and at length discovered that the whole bank was on fire for a very considerable distance. It proved to be a coal mine, to which the fire had communicated from an old Indian encampment. The beach was covered with coals, and the English chief gathered some of the softest he could find, as a black dye; it being the mineral, as he informed me, with which the natives render their quills black.

Here we waited for the large canoe, which arrived an hour after us. At half past ten we saw several Indian marks, which consisted of pieces of bark fixed on poles, and pointing to the woods, opposite to which is an old beaten road, that bore the marks of being lately frequented; the beach also was covered with tracks. At a small distance were the poles of five lodges standing; where we landed and unloaded our canoe. I then despatched one of my men and two young Indians to see if they could find any natives within a day's march of us. I wanted the English chief to go, but he pleaded fatigue, and that it would be of no use. This was the first time he had refused to comply with my desire, and jealousy, I believe, was the cause of it in the present instance; though I had taken every

precaution that he should not have cause to be jealous of the Canadians. There was not, at this time, the least appearance of snow on the opposite mountains, though they were almost covered with it, when we passed before. Set two nets, and at eleven o'clock at night the men and Indians returned. They had been to their first encampment, where there were four fires, and which had been quitted a short time before; so that they were obliged to make the circuit of several small lakes, which the natives cross with their canoes. This encampment was on the borders of a lake which was too large for them to venture round it, so that they did not proceed any further. They saw several beavers and beaver lodges in those small lakes. They killed one of these animals whose fur began to get long, a sure indication that the fall of the year approaches. They also saw many old tracks of the moose and reindeer. This is the time when the rein-deer leave the plains to come to the woods, as the mosquitoes begin to disappear; I, therefore, apprehended that we should not find a single Indian on the river side, as they would be in or about the mountains setting snares to take them.

Monday, 3.—We proceeded with a strong Westerly wind, at four this morning, the weather being cloudy and cold. At twelve it

cleared up and became fine; the current also increased. The water had fallen so much since our passage down the river, that here, as in other places, we discovered many shoals which were not then visible. We killed several geese of a larger size than those which we had generally seen. Several Indian encampments were seen along the river, and we landed at eight for the night.

Tuesday, 4.—At four in the morning we renewed our course, when it was fine and calm. The night had been cold and a very heavy dew had fallen. At nine we were obliged to land in order to gum the canoe, when the weather became extremely warm. Numerous tracks of rein-deer appeared on the side of the river. At half past five we took our station for the night, and set the nets. The current was very strong all day, and we found it very difficult to walk along the beach, from the large stones which were scattered over it.

Wednesday, 5.—We raised our nets, but had not the good fortune to take a single fish. The water was now become so low that the eddy currents would not admit of setting them. The current had not relaxed its strength; and the difficulty of walking along the beach was continued. The air was now become so cold, that our exercise, violent as it was, scarce kept us warm. We passed several points which we should not have accom-

plished, if the canoe had been loaded. We were very much fatigued, and at six were glad to conclude our toilsome march. The Indians killed two geese. The women, who did not quit the canoe, were continually employed in making shoes of moose-skin, for the men, as a pair did not last more than a day.

Thursday, 6.—The rain prevented us from proceeding till half past six, when we had a strong aft wind, which, aided by the paddles, drove us on at a great rate. We encamped at six to wait for our Indians, whom we had not seen since the morning; and at half past seven they arrived very much dissatisfied with their day's journey. Two days had now elapsed, since we had seen the least appearance of Indian habitations.

Friday, 7.—We embarked at half past three, and soon after perceived two rein-deer on the beach before us. We accordingly checked our course; but our Indians, in contending who should be the first to get near these animals, alarmed and lost them. We, however, killed a female rein-deer, and from the wounds in her hind legs, it was supposed that she had been pursued by wolves, who had devoured her young one: her udder was full of milk, and one of the young Indians poured it among some boiled corn, which he ate with great delight, esteeming it a very

delicious food. At five in the afternoon we saw an animal running along the beach, but could not determine whether it was a grey fox or a dog. In a short time, we went ashore for the night, at the entrance of a small river, as I thought there might be some natives in the vicinity of the place. I ordered my hunters to put their fusees in order, and gave them ammunition to proceed on a hunting party the next day; they were also instructed to discover if there were any natives in the neighbouring mountains. I found a small canoe at the edge of the woods, which contained a paddle and a bow: it had been repaired this spring, and the workmanship of the bark excelled any that I had yet seen. We saw several encampments in the course of the day. The current of the river was very strong, and along the points equal to rapids.

Saturday, 8.—The rain was very violent throughout the night, and continued till the afternoon of this day, when the weather began to clear, with a strong, cold, and Westerly wind. At three the Indians proceeded on the hunting expedition, and at eight they returned without having met with the least success; though they saw numerous tracks of the rein-deer. They came to an old beaten road, which one of them followed for some time; but it did not appear to have been

lately frequented. The rain now returned, and continued till the morning.

Sunday, 9.—We renewed our voyage at half past three, the weather being cold and cloudy; but at ten it became clear and moderate. We saw another canoe at the outside of the wood, and one of the Indians killed a dog, which was in a meagre, emaciated condition. We perceived various places where the natives had made their fires; for these people reside but a short time near the river, and remove from one bank to the other, as it suits their purposes. We saw a path which was connected with another on the opposite side of the river. The water had risen considerably since last night, and there had been a strong current throughout the day. At seven we made to the shore and encamped.

Monday, 10.—At three this morning we returned to our canoe; the weather fine and clear, with a light wind from the South-East. The Indians were before us in pursuit of game. At ten we landed opposite to the mountains which we had passed on the second of the last month, in order to ascertain the variation of the compass at this place: but this was accomplished in a very imperfect manner, as I could not depend on my watch. One of the hunters joined us here, fatigued and unsuccessful. As these mountains are the last of any considerable magnitude on the

South-West side of the river, I ordered my men to cross to that side of it, that I might ascend one of them. It was near four in the afternoon when I landed, and I lost no time in proceeding to the attainment of my object. I was accompanied only by a young Indian, as the curiosity of my people was subdued by the fatigue they had undergone; and we soon had reason to believe that we should pay dearly for the indulgence of our own. The wood, which was chiefly of spruce firs, was so thick that it was with great difficulty we made our way through it. When we had walked upwards of an hour, the under-wood decreased, while the white birch and poplar were the largest and tallest of their kind that I had ever seen. The ground now began to rise, and was covered with small pines, and at length we got the first view of the mountains since we had left the canoe; as they appeared to be no nearer to us, though we had been walking for three hours, than when we had seen them from the river, my companion expressed a very great anxiety to return; his shoes and leggins were torn to pieces, and he was alarmed at the idea of passing through such bad roads during the night. I persisted, however, in proceeding, with a determination to pass the night on the mountains and return on the morrow. As we approached them, the ground was quite marshy, and we waded in

water and grass up to the knees, till we came within a mile of them, when I suddenly sunk up to my arm-pits, and it was with some difficulty that I extricated myself from this disagreeable situation. I now found it impossible to proceed; to cross this marshy ground in a straight line was impracticable, and it extended so far to the right and left, that I could not attempt to make the circuit; I therefore determined to return to the canoe, and arrived there about midnight, very much fatigued with this fruitless jorney.

Tuesday, 11.—We observed several tracks along the beach, and an encampment at the edge of the woods, which appeared to be five or six days old. We should have continued our route along this side of the river, but we had not seen our hunters since yesterday morning. We accordingly embarked before three, and at five traversed the river, when we saw two of them coming down in search of us. They had killed no other animals than one beaver, and a few hares. According to their account, the woods were so thick that it was impossible to follow the game through them. They had seen several of the natives' encampments, at no great distance from the river; and it was their opinion that they had discovered us in our passage down it, and had taken care to avoid us; which accounted for the small number we had seen on our return.

I requested the English chief to return with me to the other side of the river, in order that he might proceed to discover the natives, whose tracks and habitations we had seen there; but he was backward in complying with my desire, and proposed to send the young men; but I could not trust to them, and at the same time was become rather doubtful of him. They were still afraid lest I should obtain such accounts of the other river as would induce me to travel overland to it, and that they should be called upon to accompany me. I was, indeed, informed by one of my own people, that the English chief, his wives and companions, had determned to leave me on this side of the Slave Lake, in order to go to the country of the Beaver Indians, and that about the middle of the winter he would return to that lake, where he had appointed to meet some of his relatons, who, during the last spring, had been engaged in war.

We now traversed the river, and continued to track the Indians till past twelve, when we lost all traces of them; in consequence, as we imagined, of their having crossed to the Eastern side. We saw several dogs on both shores; and one of the young Indians killed a wolf, which the men ate with great satisfaction: we shot, also, fifteen young geese that were now beginning to fly. It was eight when we took our evening station, having

lost four hours in making our traverses. There was no interruption of the fine weather during the course of this day.

Wednesday, 12.—We proceeded on our voyage at three this morning, and despatched the two young Indians across the river, that we might not miss any of the natives that should be on the banks of it. We saw many places where fires had been lately made along the beach, as well as fire running in the woods. At four we arrived at an encampment which had been left this morning. Their tracks were observable in several places in the woods, and as it might be presumed that they could not be at any great distance, it was proposed to the chief to accompany me in search of them. We accordingly, though with some hesitation on his part, penetrated several miles into the woods, but without discovering the objects of our research. The fire had spread all over the country, and had burned about three inches of the black, light soil, which covered a body of cold clay, that was so hard as not to receive the least impression of our feet. At ten we returned from our unsuccessful excursion. In the mean time the hunters had killed seven geese. There were several showers of rain, accompanied with gusts of wind and thunder. The nets had been set during our absence.

Thursday, 13.—The nets were taken up,

but not one fish was found in them; and at half past three we continued our route, with very favourable weather. We passed several places, where fires had been made by the natives, and many tracks were perceptible along the beach. At seven we were opposite the island where our pemmican had been concealed: two of the Indians were accordingly despatched in search of it, and it proved very acceptable, as it rendered us more independent of the provisions which were to be obtained by our fowling pieces, and qualified us to get out of the river without that delay which our hunters would otherwise have required. In a short time we perceived a smoke on the shore to the South-West, at the distance of three leagues, which did not appear to proceed from any running fire. The Indians, who were a little way ahead of us, did not discover it, being engaged in the pursuit of a flock of geese, at which they fired several shots, when the smoke immediately disappeared; and in a short time we saw several of the natives run along the shore, some of whom entered their canoes. Though we were almost opposite to them, we could not cross the river without going further up it, from the strength of the current; I therefore ordered our Indians to make every possible exertion, in order to speak with them, and wait our arrival. But as soon as our small canoe

struck off, we could perceive the poor affrighted people hasten to the shore, and after drawing their canoes on the beach, hurry into the woods. It was past ten before we landed at the place where they had deserted their canoes, which were four in number. They were so terrified that they had left several articles on the beach. I was very much displeased with my Indians, who instead of seeking the natives, were dividing their property. I rebuked the English chief with some severity for his conduct, and immediately ordered him, his young men, and my own people, to go in search of the fugitivs, but their fears had made them too nimble for us, and we could not overtake them. We saw several dogs in the woods, and some of them followed us to our canoe.

The English chief was very much displeased at my reproaches, and expressed himself to me in person to that effect. This was the very opportunity which I wanted, to make him acquainted with my dissatisfaction for some time past. I stated to him that I had come a great way, and at a very considerable expense, without having completed the object of my wishes, and that I suspected he had concealed from me a principal part of what the natives had told him respecting the country, lest he should be obliged to follow me: that his reason for not killing game, &c., was

his jealousy, which likewise prevented him from looking after the natives as he ought; and that we had never given him any cause for any suspicions of us. These suggestions irritated him in a very high degree, and he accused me of speaking ill words to him; he denied the charge of jealousy, and declared that he did not conceal any thing from us; an that as to the ill success of their hunting, it arose from the nature of the country, and the scarcity, which had hitherto appeared, of animals in it. He concluded by informing me that he would not accompany me any further: that though he was without ammunition, he could live in the same manner as the slaves (the name given to the inhabitants of that part of the country), and that he would remain among them. His harangue was succeeded by a loud and bitter lamentation; and his relations assisted the vociferations of his grief; though they said that their tears flowed for their dead friends. I did not interrupt their grief for two hours, but as I could not well do without them, I was at length obliged to soothe it, and induce the chief to change his resolution, which he did, but with great apparent reluctance; when we embarked as we had hitherto done.

The articles which the fugitives had left behind them, on the present occasion, were bows, arrows, snares for moose and rein-deer,

and for hares; to these may be added a few dishes, made of bark, some skins of the marten and the beaver, and old beaver robes, with a small robe made of the skin of the lynx. Their canoes were coarsely made of the bark of the spruce-fir, and will carry two or three people. I ordered my men to remove them to the shade, and gave most of the other articles to the young Indians. The English chief would not accept of any of them. In the place, and as the purchase of them, I left some cloth, some small knives, a file, two fire-steels, a comb, rings, with beads and awls. I also ordered a marten skin to be placed on a proper mould, and a beaver skin to be stretched on a frame, to which I tied a scraper. The Indians were of opinion that all these articles would be lost, as the nativs were so much frightened that they would never return. Here we lost six hours; and on our quitting the place, three of the dogs which I have already mentioned followed us along the beach.

We pitched our tents at half past eight, at the entrance of the river of the mountain; and while the people were unloading the canoe, I took a walk along the beach, and on the shoals, which being uncovered since we passed down, by the sinking of the waters, were now white with a saline substance. I sent for the English chief to sup with me,

and a dram or two dispelled all his heart-burning and discontent. He informed me that it was a custom with the Chepewyan chiefs to go to war after they had shed tears, in order to wipe away the disgrace attached to such a feminine weakness, and that in the ensuing spring he should not fail to execute his design; at the same time he declared his intention to continue with us as long as I should want him. I took care that he should carry some liquid consolation to his lodge, to prevent the return of his chagrin. The weather was fine, and the Indians killed three geese.

Friday, 14.—At a quarter before four this morning, we returned to our canoe, and went about two miles up the river of the mountains. Fire was in the ground on each side of it. In traversing, I took soundings, and found five, four and an half, and three and an half fathoms water. Its stream was very muddy, and formed a cloudy streak along the water of the great river, on the West side to the Eastern rapid, where the waters of the two rivers at length blend in one. It was impossible not to consider it as an extraordinary circumstance, that the current of the former river should not incorporate with that of the latter, but flow, as it were, in distinct streams at so great a distance, and till the contracted state of the channel unites them. We passed

several encampments of the natives, and a river which flowed in from the North, that had the appearance of being navigable. We concluded our voyage of this day at half past five in the afternoon. There were plenty of berries, which my people called *poires:* they are of a purple hue, somewhat bigger than a pea, and of a luscious taste; there were also gooseberries, and a few strawberries.

Saturday, 15.—We continued our course from three in the morning till half past five in the afternoon. We saw several encampments along the beach, till it became too narrow to admit them; when the banks rose into a considerable degree of elevation, and there were more eddy currents. The Indians killed twelve geese, and berries were collected in great abundance. The weather was sultry throughout the day.

Sunday, 16.—We continued our voyage at a quarter before four, and in five hours passed the place where we had been stationed on the 13th of June. Here the river widened, and its shores became flat. The land on the North side is low, composed of a black soil, mixed with stones, but agreeably covered with the aspen, the poplar, the white birch, the spruce-fir, &c. The current was so moderate, that we proceeded upon it almost as fast as in dead water. At twelve we passed an encampment of three fires, which was the

only one we saw in the course of the day. The weather was the same as yesterday.

Monday, 17.—We proceeded at half past three; and saw three successive encampments. From the peculiar structure of the huts, we imagined that some of the Red-Knife Indians had been in this part of the country, though it is not usual for them to come this way. I had last night ordered the young Indians to precede us, for the purpose of hunting, and at ten we overtook them. They had killed five young swans; and the English chief presented us with an eagle, three cranes, a small beaver, and two geese. We encamped at seven this evening on the same spot which had been our resting-place on the 29th of June.

Tuesday, 18.—At four this morning I equipped all the Indians for an hunting excursion, and sent them onward, as our stock of provision was nearly exhausted. We followed at half past six, and crossed over to the North shore, where the land is low and scarcely visible in the horizon. It was near twelve when we arrived. I now got an observation, when it was 61. 33. North latitude. We were near five miles to the North of the main channel of the river. The fresh tracks and beds of buffaloes were very perceptible.

Near this place a river flowed in from the Horn Mountains, which are at no great dis-

tance. We landed at five in the afternoon, and before the canoe was unloaded, the English chief arrived with the tongue of a cow, or female buffalo, when four men and the Indians were despatched for the flesh; but they did not return till it was dark. They informed me, that they had seen several human tracks in the sand on the opposite island. The fine weather continued without interruption.

Wednesday, 19.—The Indians were again sent forward in pursuit of game; and some time being employed in gumming the canoe, we did not embark till half past five, and at nine we landed to wait the return of the hunters. I here found the variation of the compass to be about twenty degrees East.

The people made themselves paddles and repaired the canoe. It is an extraordinary circumstance for which I do not pretend to account, that there is some peculiar quality in the water of this river, which corrodes wood, from the destructive effect it had on the paddles. The hunters arrived at a late hour, without having seen any large animals. Their booty consisted only of three swans and as many geese. The women were employed in gathering cranberries and crowberries, which were found in great abundance.

Thursday, 20.—We embarked at four o'clock, and took the North side of the

channel, though the current was on that side much stronger, in order to take a view of the river, which had been mentioned to me in our passage downwards, as flowing from the country of the Beaver Indians, and which fell in hereabouts. We could not, however, discover it, and it is probable that the account was referable to the river which we had passed on Tuesday. The current was very strong, and we crossed over to an island opposite to us; here it was still more impetuous, and assumed the hurry of a rapid. We found an awl and a paddle on the side of the water; the former we knew to belong to the Knisteneaux: I supposed it to be the chief Merde-d'our's and his party, who went to war last spring, and had taken this route on their return to Athabasca. Nor is it improbable that they may have been the cause that we saw so few of the natives on the banks of this river. The weather was raw and cloudy, and formed a very unpleasant contrast to the warm, sunny days, which immediately preceded it. We took up our abode for the night at half past seven, on the Northern shore, where the adjacent country is both low and flat. The Indians killed five young swans, and a beaver. There was an appearance of rain.

Friday, 21.—The weather was cold, with a strong Easterly wind and frequent showers,

so that we were detained in our station. In the afternoon the Indians got on the track of a moose-deer, but were not so fortunate as to overtake it.

Saturday, 22.—The wind veered round to the Westward, and continued to blow strong and cold. We, however, renewed our voyage, and in three hours reached the entrance of the Slave Lake, under half sail; with the paddle, it would have taken us at least eight hours. The Indians did not arrive till four hours after us; but the wind was so violent, that it was not expedient to venture into the lake; we therefore set a net, and encamped for the night. The women gathered large quantities of the fruit already mentioned, called Pathagomenan, and cranberries, crowberries, mooseberries, &c. The Indians killed two swans and three geese.

Sunday, 23.—The net produced but five small pike, and at five we embarked, and entered the lake by the same channel through which we had passed from it. The South-West side would have been the shortest, but we were not certain of there being plenty of fish along the coast, and we were sure of finding abundance of them in the course we preferred. Besides, I expected to find my people at the place where I left them, as they had received orders to remain there till the fall.

We paddled a long way into a deep bay to get the wind, and having left our mast behind us, we landed to cut another. We then hoisted sail, and were driven on at a great rate. At twelve the wind and swell were augmented to such a degree, that our under yard broke, but luckily the mast thwart resisted, till we had time to fasten down the yard with a pole, without lowering sail. We took in a large quantity of water, and had our mast given way, in all probability, we should have filled and sunk. Our course continued to be very dangerous, along a flat lee-shore, without being able to land till three in the afternoon. Two men were continually employed in bailing out the water which we took in on all sides. We fortunately doubled a point that screened us from the wind and swell, and encamped for the night, in order to wait for our Indians. We then set our nets, made a yard and mast, and gummed the canoe. On visiting the nets, we found six white fish, and two pike. The women gathered cranberries and crowberries in great plenty; and as the night came on, the weather became more moderate.

Monday, 24.—Our nets this morning produced fourteen white fish, ten pikes, and a couple of trouts. At five we embarked with a light breeze from the South, when we hoisted sail, and proceeded slowly, as our Indians

had not come up with us. At eleven we went on shore to prepare the kettle, and dry the nets; at one we were again on the water. At four in the afternoon, we perceived a large canoe with a sail, and two small ones ahead; we soon came up with them, when they proved to be M. Le Roux and an Indian, with his family, who were on a hunting party, and had been out twenty-five days. It was his intention to have gone as far as the river, to leave a letter for me, to inform me of his situation. He had seen no more Indians where I had left him; but had made a voyage to Lac la Marte, where he met eighteen small canoes of the Slave Indians, from whom he obtained five pack of skins, which were principally those of the marten. There were four Beaver Indians among them, who had bartered the greatest part of the above mentioned articles with them, before his arrival. They informed him that their relations had more skins, but that they were afraid to venture with them, though they had been informed that people were to come with goods to barter for them. He gave these people a pair of ice chisels each, and other articles, and sent them away to conduct their friends to the Slave Lake, where he was to remain during the succeeding winter.

We set three nets, and in a short time

caught twenty fish of different kinds. In the dusk of the evening, the English chief arrived with a most pitiful account that he had like to have been drowned in trying to follow us; and that the other men had also a very narrow escape. Their canoe, he said, had broken on the swell, at some distance from the shore, but as it was flat, they had with his assistance been able to save themselves. He added, that he left them lamenting, lest they should not overtake me, if I did not wait for them; he also expressed his apprehensions that they would not be able to repair their canoe. This evening I gave my men some rum to cheer them after their fatigues.

Tuesday, 25.—We rose this morning at a late hour, when we visited the nets, which produced but few fish: my people, indeed, partook of the stores of M. Le Roux. At eleven, the young Indians arrived, and reproached me for having left them so far behind. They had killed two swans, and brought me one of them. The wind was Southerly throughout the day, and too strong for us to depart, as we were at the foot of a grand traverse. At noon I had an observation, which gave 61. 29. North latitude. Such was the state of the weather, that we could not visit our nets. In the afternoon, the sky darkened, and there was lightning, accompanied with loud claps of thunder.

The wind also veered round to the Westward, and blew a hurricane.

Wednesday, 26.—It rained throughout the night, and till eight in the morning, without any alteration in the wind. The Indians went on a hunting excursion, but returned altogether without success in the evening. One of them was so unfortunate as to miss a moose-deer. In the afternoon there were heavy showers, with thunder, &c.

Thursday, 27.—We embarked before four, and hoisted sail. At nine we landed to dress victuals, and wait for M. Le Roux and the Indians. At eleven, we proceeded with fine and calm weather. At four in the afternoon, a light breeze sprang up to the Southward, to which we spread our sail, and at half past five in the afternoon, went on shore for the night. We then set our nets. The English chief and his people being quite exhausted with fatigue, he this morning expressed his desire to remain behind, in order to proceed to the country of the Beaver Indians, engaging at the same time, that he would return to Athabasca in the course of the winter.

Friday, 28.—It blew very hard throughout the night, and this morning, so that we found it a business of some difficulty to get to our nets; our trouble, however, was repaid by a considerable quantity of white fish, trout, &c. Towards the afternoon the wind increased.

Two of the men who had been gathering berries saw two moose-deer, with the tracks of buffaloes and rein-deer. About sunset we heard two shots, and saw a fire on the opposite side of the bay; we accordingly made a large fire also, that our position might be determined. When we were all gone to bed, we heard the report of a gun very near us, and in a very short time the English chief presented himself drenched with wet, and in much apparent confusion informed me that the canoe with his companions was broken to pieces; and that they had lost their fowling pieces, and the flesh of a rein-deer, which they had killed this morning. They were, he said, at a very short distance from us; and at the same time requested that fire might be sent to them, as they were starving with cold. They and his women, however, soon joined us, and were immediately accommodated with dry clothes.

Saturday, 29.—I sent the Indians on an hunting party, but they returned without success; and they expressed their determination not to follow me any further, from their apprehension of being drowned.

Sunday, 30.—We embarked at one this morning, and took from the nets a large trout, and twenty white fish. At sunrise a smart aft breeze sprang up, which wafted us to M. Le Roux's house by two in the after-

noon. It was late before he and our Indians arrived; when, according to a promise which I had made the latter, I gave them a plentiful equipment of iron ware, ammunition, tobacco, &c., as a recompense for the toil and inconvenience they had sustained with me.

I proposed to the English chief to proceed to the country of the Beaver Indians, and bring them to dispose of their peltries to M. Le Roux, whom I intended to leave there the ensuing winter. He had already engaged to be at Athabasca, in the month of March next, with plenty of furs.

Monday, 31.—I sat up all night to make the necessary arrangements for the embarkation of this morning, and to prepare instructions for M. Le Roux. We obtained some provisions here, and parted from him at five, with fine calm weather. It soon, however, became necessary to land on a small island, to stop the leakage of the canoe, which had been occasioned by the shot of an arrow under the water mark, by some Indian children. While this business was proceeding, we took the opportunity of dressing some fish. At twelve, the wind sprang up from the South-East, which was in the teeth of our direction, so that our progress was greatly impeded. I had an observation, which gave 62. 15. North latitude. We landed at seven in the evening, and pitched our tents.

Tuesday, 1.—We continued our voyage at five in the morning, the weather calm and fine, and passed the Isle a la Cache about twelve, but could not perceive the land, which was seen in our former passage. On passing the Carreboeuf Islands, at five in the afternoon, we saw land to the South by West, which we thought was the opposite side of the lake, stretching away to a great distance. We landed at half past six in the evening, when there was thunder, and an appearance of change in the weather.

Wednesday, 2.—It rained and blew hard the latter part of the night. At half past five the rain subsided, when we made a traverse of twelve miles, and took in a good deal of water. At twelve it became calm, when I had an observation, which gave 61. 36. North latitude. At three in the afternoon, there was a slight breeze from the Westward which soon increased, when we hoisted sail, and took a traverse of twenty-four miles, for the point of the old Fort, where we arrived at seven, and stopped for the night. This traverse shortened our way three leagues; indeed we did not expect to have cleared the lake in such a short time.

Thursday, 3.—It blew with great violence throughout the night, and at four in the morning we embarked, when we did not make more than five miles in three hours, without

stopping; notwithstanding we were sheltered from the swell by a long bank. We now entered the small river, where the wind could have no effect upon us. There were frequent showers in the course of the day, and we encamped at six in the evening.

Friday, 4.—The morning was dark and cloudy, nevertheless we embarked at five; but at ten it cleared up. We saw a few fowl, and at seven in the evening, went on shore for the night.

Saturday, 5.—The weather continued to be cloudy. At five we proceeded, and at eight it began to rain very hard. In about half an hour we put to shore, and were detained for the remaining part of the day.

Sunday, 6.—It rained throughout the night, with a strong North wind. Numerous flocks of wild fowl passed to the Southward; at six in the afternoon, the rain, in some measure, subsided, and we embarked, but it soon returned with renewed violence; we, nevertheless took the advantage of an aft wind, though it cost us a complete drenching. The hunters killed seven geese, and we pitched our tents at half past six in the evening.

Monday, 7.—We were on the water at five this morning, with a head wind, accompanied by successive showers. At three in the afternoon, we ran the canoe on a stump, and it filled with water before she could be got to

land. Two hours were employed in repairing her, and at seven in the evening, we took our station for the night.

Tuesday, 8.—We renewed our voyage at half past four in a thick mist which lasted till nine, when it cleared away, and fine weather succeeded. At three in the afternoon we came to the first carrying-place, *Portage des Noyes*, and encamped at the upper end of it to dry our clothes, some of which were almost rotten.

Wednesday, 9.—We embarked at five in the morning, and our canoe was damaged on the men's shoulders, who were bearing it over the carrying-place, called *Portage du Chetique.* The guide repaired her, however, while the other men were employed in carrying the baggage. The canoe was gummed at the carrying-place named the *Portage de la Montagne.* After having passed the carrying-places, we encamped at the Dog River, at half past four in the afternoon, in a state of great fatigue. The canoe was again gummed, and paddles were made to replace those that had been broken in ascending the rapids. A swan was the only animal we killed throughout the day.

Thursday, 10.—There was rain and violent wind during the night: in the morning the former subsided and the latter increased. At half past five we continued our course

with a North-Westerly wind. At seven we hoisted sail: in the forenoon there were frequent showers of rain and hail, and in the afternoon two showers of snow: the wind was at this time very strong, and at six in the evening we landed at a lodge of Knisteneaux, consisting of three men and five women and children. They were on their return from war, and one of them was very sick: they separated from the rest of their party in the enemy's country, from absolute hunger. After this separation, they met with a family of the hostile tribe, whom they destroyed. They were entirely ignorant of the fate of their friends, but imagined that they had returned to the Peace River, or had perished for want of food. I gave medicine to the sick,* and a small portion of ammunition to

* This man had conceived an idea, that the people with whom he had been at war, had thrown medicine at him, which had caused his present complaint, and that he despaired of recovery. The natives are so superstitious, that this idea alone was sufficient to kill him. Of this weakness I took advantage; and assured him, that if he would never more go to war with such poor defenceless people, I would cure him. To this proposition he readily consented, and on my giving him medicine, which consisted of Turlington's balsam, mixed in water, I declared that it would lose its effect, if he was not sincere in the promise that he made me. In short, he actually recovered, was true to his engagements, and on all occasions manifested his gratitude to me.

the healthy; which, indeed, they very much wanted, as they had entirely lived for the last six months on the produce of their bows and arrows. They appeared to have been great sufferers by their expedition.

Friday, 11.—It froze hard during the night, and was very cold throughout the day, with an appearance of snow. We embarked at half past four in the morning, and continued our course till six in the evening, when we landed for the night at our encampment of the third of June.

Saturday, 12.—The weather was cloudy, and also very cold. At night, we embarked with a North-East wind, and entered the Lake of the Hills. About ten, the wind veered to the West-ward, and was as strong as we could bear it with the high sail, so that we arrived at Chepewyan fort by three o'clock in the afternoon, where we found Mr. Macleod, with five men busily employed in building a new house. Here, then, we concluded this voyage, which had occupied the considerable space of one hundred and two days.

CHAPTER VIII.

OCTOBER 10, 1792.

Having made every necessary preparation, I left Fort Chepewyan, to proceed up the Peace River. I had resolved to go as far as our most distant settlement, which would occupy the remaining part of the season, it being the route by which I proposed to attempt my next discovery, across the mountains from the source of that river; for whatever distance I could reach this fall, would be a proportionate advancement of my voyage.

In consequence of this design, I left the establishment of Fort Chepewyan, in charge of Mr. Roderic Mackenzie, accompanied by two canoes laden with the necessary articles for trade: we accordingly steered West for one of the branches that communicates with the Peace River, called the Pine River; at the entrance of which we waited for the other canoes, in order to take some supplies from them, as I had reason to apprehend they would not be able to keep up with us. We entered the Peace River at seven in the morning of the 12th, taking a Westerly course. It is evident, that all the land between it and the Lake of the Hills, as far as the Elk River,

is formed by the quantity of earth and mud, which is carried down by the streams of those two great rivers. In this space there are several lakes. The Lake Clear Water, which is the deepest, Lake Vassieu, and the Athabasca Lake, which is the largest of the three, and whose denomination in the Kneisteneaux language implies, a flat, low, swampy country, subject to inundations. The two last lakes are now so shallow, that from the cause just mentioned, there is every reason to expect, that in a few years they will have exchanged their character, and become extensive forests.

This country is so level, that, at some seasons, it is entirely overflowed, which accounts for the periodical influx and reflux of the waters between the Lake of the Hills and the Peace River.

On the 13th at noon we came to the Peace Point; from which, according to the report of my interpreter, the river derives its name; it was the spot where the Knisteneaux and Beaver Indians settled their dispute; the real name of the river and point being that of the land which was the object of contention.

When this country was formerly invaded by the Knisteneaux, they found the Beaver Indians inhabiting the land about Portage la Roche; and the adjoining tribe were those whom they called slaves. They drove both

these tribes before them; when the latter proceeded down the river from the Lake of the Hills, in consequence of which that part of it obtained the name of the Slave River. The former proceeded up the river; and when the Knisteneaux made peace with them, this place was settled to be the boundary.

We continued our voyage, and I did not find the current so strong in this river as I had been induced to believe, though this, perhaps, was not the period to form a correct notion of that circumstance, as well as of the breadth, the water being very low; so that the stream has not appeared to me to be in any part that I have seen, more than a quarter of a mile wide.

The weather was cold and raw, so as to render our progress unpleasant; at the same time we did not relax in our expedition, and, at three on the afternoon of the 17th we arrived at the falls. The river at this place is about four hundred yards broad, and the fall about twenty feet high: the first carrying place is eight hundred paces in length, and the last, which is about a mile onwards, is something more than two-thirds of that distance. Here we found several fires, from which circumstance we concluded, that the canoes destined for this quarter, which left the fort some days before us, could not be far a-head. The weather continued to be very

cold, and the snow that fell during the night was several inches deep.

On the morning of the 18th, as soon as we got out of the draught of the fall, the wind being at North-East, and strong in our favour, we hoisted sail, which carried us on at a considerable rate against the current, and passed the Loon River before twelve o'clock; from thence we soon came along the Grande Isle, at the upper end of which we encamped for the night. It now froze very hard: indeed, it had so much the appearance of winter, that I began to entertain some alarm lest we might be stopped by the ice: we therefore set off at three o'clock in the morning of the 19th, and about eight we landed at the Old Establishment.

The passage to this place from Athabasca having been surveyed by M. Vandrieul, formerly in the Company's service, I did not think it necessary to give any particular attention to it; I shall, however, just observe, that the course in general from the Lake of the Hills to the falls, is Westerly, and as much to the North as the South of it, from thence it is about West-South-West to this fort.

The country in general is low from our entrance of the river to the falls, and with the exception of a few open parts covered with grass, it is clothed with wood. Where the

banks are very low the soil is good, being composed of the sediment of the river and putrefied leaves and vegetables. Where they are more elevated, they display a face of yellowish clay, mixed with small stones. On a line with the falls, and on either side of the river, there are said to be very extensive plains, which afford pasture to numerous herds of buffaloes. Our people a-head slept here last night, and, from their carelessness, the fire was communicated to and burned down, the large house, and was proceeding fast to the smaller buildings when we arrived to extinguish it.

We continued our voyage, the course of the river being South-West by West one mile and a quarter, South by East one mile, South-West by South three miles, West by South one mile, South-South-West two miles, South four miles, South-West seven miles and a half, South by West one mile, North-North-West two miles and a half, South five miles and a quarter, South-West one mile and a half, North-East by East three miles and a half, and South-East by East one mile.

We overtook Mr. Finlay, with his canoes, who was encamped near the fort of which he was going to take the charge, during the ensuing winter, and made every necessary preparative for a becoming appearance on our arrival the following morning. Although I had

been since the year 1787, in the Athabasca country, I had never yet seen a single native of that part of it which we had now reached.

At six o'clock in the morning of the 20th, we landed before the house amidst the rejoicing and firing of the people, who were animated with the prospect of again indulging themselves in the luxury of rum, of which they had been deprived since the beginning of May; as it is a practice throughout the North-West neither to sell or give any rum to the natives during the summer. There was at this time only one chief with his people, the other two being hourly expected with their bands; and on the 21st and 22d they all arrived except the war chief and fifteen men. As they very soon expressed their desire of the expected regale, I called them together, to the number of forty-two hunters, or men capable of bearing arms, to offer some advice, which would be equally advantageous to them and to us, and I strengthened my admonition with a nine gallon cask of reduced rum, and a quantity of tobacco. At the same time I observed, that as I should not often visit them, I had instanced a greater degree of liberality than they had been accustomed to.

The number of people belonging to this establishment amounts to about three hundred, of which, sixty are hunters. Although they appear from their language to be of the

same stock as the Chepewyans, they differ from them in appearance, manners, and customs, as they have adopted those of their former enemies, the Knisteneaux; they speak their language, as well as cut their hair, paint, and dress like them, and possess their immoderate fondness for liquor and tobacco. This description, however, can be applied only to the men, as the women are less adorned even than those of the Chepewyan tribes. We could not observe, without some degree of surprize, the contrast between the neat and decent appearance of the men, and the nastiness of the women. I am disposed, however, to think, that this circumstance is generally owing to the extreme submission and abasement of the latter: for I observed, that one of the chiefs allowed two of his wives more liberty and familiarity than were accorded to the others, as well as a more becoming exterior, and their appearance was proportionably pleasing; I shall, however, take a future opportunity to speak more at large on this subject.

There were frequent changes of the weather in the course of the day, and it froze rather hard in the night. The thickness of the ice in the morning was a sufficient notice for me to proceed. I accordingly gave the natives such good counsel as might influence their behaviour, communicated my directions to Mr.

Findlay for his future conduct, and took my leave under several vollies of musketry, on the morning of the 23d. I had already dispatched my loaded canoes two days before, with directions to continue their progress without waiting for me. Our course was South-South-East one mile and an half, South three quarters; East seven miles and a half, veering gradually to the West four miles and an half. South-East by South three miles, South-East three miles and an half, East-South-East to Long Point three miles, South-West one mile and a quarter, East by North four miles and three quarters, West three miles and an half, West-South-West one mile, East by South five miles and a half, South three miles and three quarters, South-East by South three miles, East-South-East three miles, East-North-East one mile, when there was a river that flowed in on the right, East two miles and an half, East-South-East half a mile, South-East by South seven miles and an half, South two miles, South-South-East three miles and an half; in the course of which we passed an island South by West, where a rivulet flowed in on the right, one mile, East one mile and an half, South five miles, South-East by South four miles and an half, South-West one mile, South-East by East four miles and an half, West-South-West half a mile, South-West six miles and

three quarters, South-East by South one mile and an half, South one mile and an half; South-East by South two miles, South-West three quarters of a mile, South-East by South two miles and an half, East by South one mile and three quarters, South two miles, South-East one mile and an half, South-South-East half a mile, East by South two miles and an half, North-East three miles, South-West by West short distance to the establishment of last year, East-North-East four miles, South-South-East one mile and three quarters, South half a mile, South-East by South three quarters of a mile, North-East by East one mile, South three miles, South-South-East one mile and three quarters, South by East four miles and an half, South-West three miles, South by East two miles, South by West one mile and an half, South-West two miles, South by West four miles and an half, South-West one mile and an half, and South by East three miles. Here we arrived at the forks of the river; the Eastern branch appearing to be not more than half the size of the Western one. We pursued the latter, in a course South-West by West six miles, and landed on the first of November at the place which was designed to be my winter residence: indeed, the weather had been so cold and disagreeable, that I was more than once apprehensive of our being stopped by

the ice, and, after all, it required the utmost exertions of which my men were capable to prevent it; so that on their arrival they were quite exhausted. Nor were their labours at an end, for there was not a single hut to receive us: it was, however, now in my power to feed and sustain them in a more comfortable manner.

We found two men here who had been sent forward last spring, for the purpose of squaring timber for the erection of a house, and cutting pallisades, &c., to surround it. With them was the principal chief of the place, and about seventy men, who had been anxiously waiting for our arrival, and received us with every mark of satisfaction and regard which they could express. If we might judge from the quantity of powder that was wasted on our arrival, they certainly had not been in want of ammunition, at least during the summer.

The banks of the river, from the falls, are in general lofty, except at low woody points, accidentally formed in the manner I have already mentioned: they also displayed, in all their broken parts, a face of clay, intermixed with stone; in some places there likewise appeared a black mould.

In the summer of 1788, a small spot was cleared at the Old Establishment, which is situated on a bank thirty feet above the level

of the river, and was sown with turnips, carrots, and parsnips. The first grew to a large size, and the others thrived very well. An experiment was also made with potatoes and cabbage, the former of which were successful; but for want of care the latter failed. The next winter the person who had undertaken this cultivation, suffered the potatoes which had been collected for seed, to catch the frost, and none had been since brought to this place. There is not the least doubt but the soil would be very productive, if a proper attention was given to its preparation. In the fall of the year 1787, when I first arrived at Athabasca, Mr. Pond was settled on the banks of the Elk River, where he remained for three years, and had formed as fine a kitchen garden as I ever saw in Canada.

In addition to the wood which flourished below the fall, these banks produce the cypress tree, arrow-wood, and the thorn. On either side of the river, though invisible from it, are extensive plains, which abound in buffaloes, elks, wolves, foxes, and bears. At a considerable distance to the Westward, is an immense ridge of high land or mountains, which take an oblique direction from below the falls, and are inhabited by great numbers of deer, which are seldom disturbed, but when the Indians go to hunt the beaver in those parts; and, being tired with the flesh

of the latter, vary their food with that of the former. This ridge bears the name of the Deer Mountain. Opposite to our present situation, are beautiful meadows, with various animals grazing on them, and groves of poplars irregularly scattered over them.

My tent was no sooner pitched, than I summoned the Indians together, and gave each of them about four inches of Brazil tobacco, a dram of spirits, and lighted the pipe. As they had been very troublesome to my predecessor, I informed them that I had heard of their misconduct, and was come among them to inquire into the truth of it. I added also that it would be an established rule with me to treat them with kindness, if their behaviour should be such as to deserve it; but, at the same time, that I should be equally severe if they failed in those returns which I had a right to expect from them. I then presented them with a quantity of rum, which I recommended to be used with discretion; and added some tobacco, as a token of peace. They, in return, made me the fairest promises; and having expressed the pride they felt on beholding me in their country, took their leave.

I now proceeded to examine my situation; and it was with great satisfaction I observed that the two men who had been sent hither some time before us, to cut and square timber for our future operations, had employed

the intervening period with activity and skill. They had formed a sufficient quantity of pallisades of eighteen feet long, and seven inches in diameter, to inclose a square spot of an hundred and twenty feet; they had also dug a ditch of three feet deep to receive them; and had prepared timber, planks, &c., for the erection of a house.

I was, however, so much occupied in settling matters with the Indians, and equipping them for their winter hunting, that I could not give my attention to any other object, till the 7th, when I set all hands at work to construct the fort, build the house, and form store houses. On the preceding day the river began to run with ice, which we call the last of the navigation. On the 11th we had a South-West wind, with snow. On the 16th, the ice stopped in the other fork, which was not above a league from us, across the intervening neck of land. The water in this branch continued to flow till the 22d, when it was arrested also by the frost, so that we had a passage across the river, which would last to the latter end of the succeeding April. This was a fortunate circumstance, as we depended for our support upon what the hunters could provide for us, and they had been prevented by the running of the ice from crossing the river. They now, however, very shortly procured us as much fresh meat as we

required, though it was for some time a toilsome business to my people, for as there was not yet a sufficient quantity of snow to run sledges, they were under the necessity of loading themselves with the spoils of the chase.

On the 27th the frost was so severe that the axes of the workmen became almost as brittle as glass. The weather was very various until the 2d of December, when my Farenheit's thermometer was injured by an accident, which rendered it altogether useless. The table on page 353, therefore, from the 16th of November, to this unfortunate circumstance, is the only correct account of the weather which I can offer.

In this situation, removed from all those ready aids which add so much to the com· fort, and, indeed is a principal characteristic of civilized life, I was under the necessity of employing my judgment and experience in accessory circumstances by no means connected with the habits of my life, or the enterprise in which I was immediately engaged. I was now among the people who had no knowledge whatever of remediable application to those disorders and accidents to which man is liable in every part of the globe, in the distant wilderness, as in the peopled city. They had not the least acquaintance with that primitive medicine, which consists in an ex-

Month and year.	Date.	Hours A. M.	Below 0.	Above 0.	Wind.	Weather.	Hour.	Below 0.	Above 0.	Wind.	Weather.	Hour P. M.	Below 0.	Above 0.	Wind.	Weather.	
1792. Nov.	16	8½	..	10	....		12	0	14	....		6	..	15	....	Cloudy.	
	17	8½	..	17	....	Clear.	12	..	20	....	Clear.	6	..	23	....	ditto.	
	18	9	..	19	E. S. E.		12	..	21	E. S. E.		6	..	14	E. S. E.	Clear.	
	19	8	..	5	N. W.		12	..	12	N. W.		6	..	9	N. W.	ditto.	Strong wind.
	20	8½	..	4	....	ditto.	12	..	14	....	ditto.	6	..	19	....	Cloudy.	At 10 last night 1 below 0.
	21	8	..	19	....		12	..	25	....		6	..	23	....	....	River stopped.
	22	9	..	27	....	Cloudy.	12	..	29	....	Cloudy.	6	..	28	....	Cloudy.	Ice drove, and water rises.
	23	8½	..	2	N.	Clear.	12	..	23	....	Clear.	6	..	15	N.	....	Ice drove again.
	24	8	3	..	....	ditto.	12	0	0	N. E.		6	1	..	N. E.	Cloudy.	
	25	8	14	..	....	ditto.	12	4	..	....		6	2	..	....	Clear.	Snowed last night 2 inches.
	26	9	10	..	N.	ditto.	12	..	2	N.		6	0	0	N.	ditto.	
	27	8	2	..	....	ditto.	12	..	2	....		6	..	1	S. W.	ditto.	
	28	8	16	..	....	ditto.	12	3	..	....		6	7	..	S.	ditto.	After dark, overcast.
	29	7½	..	4	....	Cloudy.	12	..	13	....		6	..	7	....	ditto.	Ditto, a little wind S. W.
	30	9	..	4	S.		12	..	13	S.	Cloudy.	5	..	16	S.	Cloudy.	
Dec.	1	9	..	0	....		12	..	19	S. E.		5	..	24	S. E.	ditto.	Fell 3 inches snow last night.
	2	9	..	27	E.												

perience of the healing virtues of herbs and plants, and is frequently found among uncivilised and savage nations. This circumstance now obliged me to be their physician and surgeon, as a woman with a swelled breast, which had been lacerated with flint stones for the cure of it, presented herself to my attention, and by cleanliness, poultices, and healing salve, I succeeded in producing a cure. One of my people, also, who was at work in the woods, was attacked with a sudden pain near the first joint of his thumb, which disabled him from holding an axe. On examining his arm, I was astonished to find a narrow red stripe, about half an inch wide, from his thumb to his shoulder; the pain was violent, and accompanied with chilliness and shivering. This was a case that appeared to be beyond my skill, but it was necessary to do something towards relieving the mind of the patient, though I might be unsuccessful in removing his complaint. I accordingly prepared a kind of volatile linament of rum and soap, with which I ordered his arm to be rubbed, but with little or no effect. He was in a raving state throughout the night, and the red stripe not only increased, but was also accompanied with the appearance of several blotches on his body, and pains in his stomach; the propriety of taking some blood from him now occurred to me, and I ventured, from

absolute necessity, to perform that operation for the first time, and with an effect that justified the treatment. The following night afforded him rest, and in a short time he regained his former health and activity.

I was very much surprised on walking in the woods at such an inclement period of the year, to be saluted with the singing of birds, while they seemed by their vivacity to be actuated by the invigorating power of a more genial season. Of these birds the male was something less than the robin; part of his body is of a delicate fawn colour, and his neck, breast, and belly, of a deep scarlet; the wings are black, edged with fawn colour, and two white stripes running across them; the tail is variegated, and the head crowned with a tuft. The female is smaller than the male, and of a fawn colour throughout, except on the neck, which is enlivened by an hue of glossy yellow. I have no doubt but they are constant inhabitants of this climate, as well as some other small birds which we saw, of a grey colour.


A MAP OF AMERICA,
between Latitudes 40 and 70 NORTH, and Longitudes 45 and 180 WEST,
EXHIBITING MACKENZIE's TRACK
From Montreal to Fort Chipewyan & from thence to the North Sea
In 1789, & to the West Pacific Ocean in 1793.
NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN
ATLANTIC OCEAN
DAVIS STRAIT
HUDSONS BAY
LABRADOR
UNITED STATES
Longitude West 95 from Greenwich

